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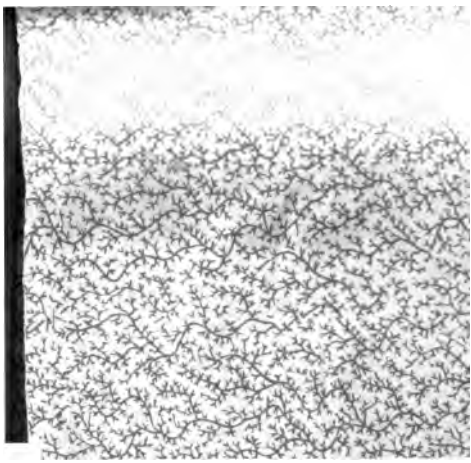

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LEONIDAS,

A POEM.





LEONIDAS,

A POEM,

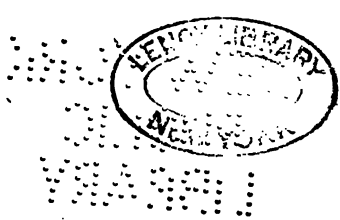
BY RICHARD GLOVER.

From the Sixth London edition.

BALTIMORE:
PUBLISHED BY NEAL, WILLS & COLE.

Benjamin Edes, printer.

1814.





RICHARD GLOVER.

R. GLOVER, the author of the celebrated poem
eonidas, was born in London, and was the son
lohn Glover, Esq. an eminent Hamburgh merchant,
married Miss West, sister of the Right Honourable
ard West, Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Mr. Glo-
uncle being in that high station, it was originally
nded that he should be brought up to the law; but
Lord Chancellor dying when his nephew was very
ng, the plan was altered, and he was brought up to
ather's professio.
r. Glover, by a lady he married (Miss Nunn), of the
nty of Essex, and with whom he received a conside-
le fortune, had three children; a daughter, who died
ng; Captain Glover, who died in the service of his
ntry off the island of Jamaica, commanding his Ma-
y's ship Janus; and Richard, his surviving son, who
ed in the last parliament for the borough of Penryn
Cornwall.
e received the whole of his education under the
erend Daniel Sanxay at Cheam School; a place
ch he afterwards delighted to visit, and sometimes
nded the anniversary held of late years in London,
re he seemed happy in relating his juvenile adven-
s. At this seminary he distinguished himself by
quickness of his progress, and early began to exhib
pecimens of his poetical powers.
s a merchant he soon made a conspicuous figure;
his commercial affairs did not occupy his whole at-
tion; he still found leisure to cultivate the study of
try, and continued to associate with those who were
inent in literature and science. One of his earliest
nds was Green, the ingenious, though obsure, author

But there's a youth that you can name,
Who needs no leading-strings to fame,
Whose quick maturity of brain
The birth of Pallas may explain:
Dreaming of whose depending fate,
I heard Melpomene debate;
This, this is he that was foretold
Should emulate our Greeks of old;
Inspir'd by me with sacred art,
He sings, and rules the varied heart;
If Jove's dread anger he rehearse,
We hear the thunder in his verse;
If he describe love turn'd to rage,
The furies riot on his page;
If he fair liberty and law,
By ruffian pow'r expiring, draw,
The keener passions then engage
Anger, and sanctify their rage;
If he attempt disastrous love,
We hear those plaints that wound the grove;
Within the kinder passions glow,
And tears, distill'd from pity, flow.

The observation made upon Gray, by his fri



Boadicea and Medea, tragedies, performed both with much applause.

And the Athenaid, or a sequel to Leonidas, and forming a counterpart to it, in thirty books, presented to the world, with a few alterations from the pen of a friend, in the year 1788.

He also wrote a second part of Medea, not yet performed.

Leonidas was inscribed to Lord Cobham, and, on its first appearance, was received by the public with great applause.

At the time of its publication a zeal, or rather rage, for liberty prevailed in England. A constellation of great men, distinguished by their virtues as well as by their talents, set themselves in opposition to the court. Every species of composition that bore the sacred name of freedom recommended itself to their protection, and soon obtained possession of the public favor; hence a poem founded on the noblest principles of liberty, and displaying the most brilliant examples of patriotism, soon found its way into the world. It was praised in the warmest terms by Lyttleton and Doctor Pemberton, and passed through three editions in 1737 and 1738; but, as its favorable reception was not founded entirely on its intrinsic merit, it experienced afterwards, without deserving it, the fate of those literary productions, which are indebted for a temporary celebrity to the influence of party principles.

It first came out in nine books; but in the last edition published by the author (in 1770) was extended to twelve; and had also several new characters added, besides placing the old ones in new situations. The improvements were very considerable; but the public attention was not sufficiently alive to recompense the pains bestowed on this once popular performance.

Though not in the highest class of epic poems, it cannot be read without delight. It is characterized by a bold spirit of liberty, by generous, tender, and noble sentiments. The author every where appears a virtu-



ous man and a good citizen. The characters
discriminated, as is justly exemplified in D
ton's learned commentary; and the style pos
ny poetical graces, though it is sometimes fa
prosaic. It abounds in the affecting, the t
the beautiful, rather than in the heroic an
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Mr. Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, M
Lyttleton, afterwards Lord Lyttleton, Earl
Lord Cobham, and many others of the same
his connexion with whom introduced him
tice of Frederick Prince of Wales, who hon
with his friendship, and distinguished him by
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His talents for public speaking, his knowl
litical affairs, and his information concerning
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He accepted the office; and in summing up th
gave very striking proofs of his oratorical pow
remarkable speech was pronounced at the
House of Commons, January 27, 1742, and
wards published under the title of 'A short
the late application to parliament made b
chants of London, upon the neglect of their
the evidence thereupon, as summed up by M
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don he acquired, and with great justice, the
of an able and steady patriot; and indeed, o
casion, he shewed his zeal for the commerci
of the nation, as well as his attachment to t



of his countrymen in general, and that of the city of London in particular.

Our author, being induced by the importunity of his friends, offered himself in the year 1751 as a candidate for the place of Chamberlain of the city of London, in opposition to the late Thomas Harrison, Esq. Unfortunately for him he did not declare his intention till most of the livery had engaged their votes; to which circumstance was ascribed the loss of his election. On this occasion he addressed the livery in a very manly and animated speech.

In the parliament which met at the accession of his present majesty (1761), he was elected for Weymouth. He undertook to manage the interests of the merchants and traders of London concerned in the trade to Germany and Holland, and of the dealers in foreign linens, in their application to Parliament in May 1774. Both the speeches made on these occasions were published within the same year.

In 1775 he engaged on behalf of the West-India merchants, in their application to parliament, examined the witnesses, and summed up the evidence in the same masterly manner he had done on a former occasion. For the assistance he afforded the merchants in this business he was complimented by them with a service of plate, of the value of 300l. The speech which he delivered in the house, was printed in that year.—This was the last opportunity he had of displaying in public his oratorical talents. Having now arrived at a period of life which demanded a recess from business, he retired, and wore out the remainder of his days with dignity and with honour, in the exercise of the virtues of private life, and in his attention to his muse. He died at his house in Albemarle-street, November 25, 1786, in the 75th year of his age, and was buried in the family vault in St. Edmund the King's in Lombard-street.

We shall conclude this short account of the life and writings of our Author by the following observations upon *Leonidas from the pen of Lyttleton.*



ous man and a good citizen. The characters are finely discriminated, as is justly exemplified in Dr. Pemberton's learned commentary; and the style possesses many poetical graces, though it is sometimes familiar and prosaic. It abounds in the affecting, the tender, and the beautiful, rather than in the heroic and sublime. The parting of Leonidas and his wife is perhaps more interesting than that of Hector and Andromache. The episode of Ariana and Teribazus is poetical and pleasing. On the whole we may safely venture to place Leonidas by the side of Lucan's Pharsalia, Statius's Thebaid, Camoen's Lusiad, and the Henriade of Voltaire.

Mr. Glover passed a great portion of his time with Mr. Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, Mr. George Lyttleton, afterwards Lord Lyttleton, Earl Temple, Lord Cobham, and many others of the same principles, his connexion with whom introduced him to the notice of Frederick Prince of Wales, who honoured him with his friendship, and distinguished him by his countenance and patronage.

His talents for public speaking, his knowledge of political affairs, and his information concerning trade and commerce, pointed him out to the merchants of London as a proper person to conduct their application to parliament, on the subject of the neglect of their trade. He accepted the office; and in summing up the evidence gave very striking proofs of his oratorical powers. This remarkable speech was pronounced at the bar of the House of Commons, January 27, 1742, and soon afterwards published under the title of 'A short account of the late application to parliament made by the merchants of London, upon the neglect of their trade, with the evidence thereupon, as summed up by Mr. Glover.' By his appearance in behalf of the merchants of London he acquired, and with great justice, the character of an able and steady patriot; and indeed, on every occasion, he shewed his zeal for the commercial interests of the nation, as well as his attachment to the welfare



of his countrymen in general, and that of the city of London in particular.

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We shall conclude this short account of the life and writings of our Author by the following observations upon Leonidas from the pen of Lyttleton.

"Since I have read Leonidas," says he (Common Sense, No. 10). "I have been so full of all the beauties I met with in it, that, to give some vent, I found it necessary to write to you, and invite my countrymen to take part with me in the pleasure of admiring what so justly deserves their admiration. And in doing this I have yet a further view; I desire to do them good as well as please them; for never yet was an epic poem wrote with so noble and so useful a design; the whole plan and purpose of it being to shew the superiority of freedom over slavery; and how much virtue, public spirit, and the love of liberty, are preferable, both in their nature and effects, to riches, luxury, and the insolence of power.

"This great and instructive moral is set forth by an action the most proper to illustrate it of all that ancient or modern history can afford, enforced by the most sublime spirit of poetry, and adorned by all the charms of an active and warm imagination, under the restraint of a cool and sober judgment.

"And it has another special claim to protection; for, I will venture to say, there never was an epic poem which had so near a relation as this to common sense; the author of it not having allowed himself the liberty, so largely taken by his predecessors, of making excursions beyond the bounds, and out of sight of it, into the airy regions of poetical mythology. There are neither fighting gods, nor scolding goddesses; neither miracles, nor enchantments; neither monsters, nor giants, in his work; but whatsoever human nature can afford that is most astonishing, marvellous, and sublime.

"And it has this particular merit to recommend it; that though it has quite the air of an ancient epic poem, there is not so much as a single simile in it that is borrowed from any of the ancients; and yet, I believe there is hardly any poem that has such a variety of beautiful comparisons; so just a confidence had the author in the extent and rich abundance of his own imagination.



ıpproached, he could not take a view of the
p, which lay concealed behind a rampart, fur-
d by the Phocians at the entrance of Ther-
ı the side of Greece; so that his whole atten-
ngaged by those who were on guard before
d who at that instant chanced to be the La-
ns. Their manner and gestures greatly as-
: Persian. Some were amusing themselves
ic exercises; others were combing their hair;
overed a total disregard of him, whom they
depart, and report to Xerxes, what he had
ı appearing to that prince quite ridiculous,
Demaratus, who was with him in the camp,
ed him to explain this strange behaviour of
mens. Demaratus informed him, that it was a
ng the Spartans to comb down and adjust
/hen they were determined to fight till the
.ty. Xerxes notwithstanding, in the confi-
s power sent ambassadors to the Grecians to
ir arms, to bid them disperse, and become
nd allies; which proposals being received
ı, he commanded the Medes and Cissians to
: Grecians, and bring them alive into his
'hese nations immediately attacked the Gre-
were soon repulsed with great slaughter;
still succeeded; but with no better fortune
ıt; being opposed to an enemy not only supe-
ur and resolution, but who had the advan-
pline, and were furnished with better arms
re and defensive.

ın his Laconic apothegms reports, that the
ş offered to invest Leonidas with the sove-
Greece, provided he would join his arms to
ıia. This offer was too considerable a con-
to have been made before a trial of their
.ust therefore have been proposed by Xerx-
ı a series of *ill* success, as might probably
ed the insolence of his temper; and it may

he easily admitted, that the virtue of Leonidas w
proof against any temptations of that nature. Whet
er this be a fact or not, thus much is certain, that Xe
es was reduced to extreme difficulties by this resolu
defence of Thermopylæ; till he was extricated fr
his distress by a Malian, named Epialtes, who conduct
twenty thousand of the Persian army into Gree
through a pass which lay higher up the country amo
the mountains of Oeta: whereas the passage at Th
mopylæ was situated on the the sea-shore between the
mountains and the Malian bay. The defence of the u
per pass had been committed to a thousand Phocia
who upon the first sight of the enemy inconsiderate
abandoned their station, and put themselves in arra
upon a neighbouring eminence; but the Persians wi
ly avoided an engagement, and with the utmost expe
tion marched to Thermopylæ.

Leonidas no sooner received information, that th
Barbarians had passed the mountains, and would soo
be in a situation to surround him, than he commande
the allies to retreat, reserving the three hundred Spa
tans, and four hundred Thebans, whom, as they followe
him with reluctance at first, he now compelled to sta
But the Thespians, whose number amounted to seve
hundred, would not be persuaded by Leonidas to forsak
him. Their comamnder was Demophilus, and the mo
eminent amongst them for his valour was Dithyrambu
the son of Harmatides. Among the Lacedæmonians
the most conspicuous next to Leonidas was Dieneces
who being told, that the multitude of Persian arrow
would obscure the sun, replied, the battle would the
be in the shade. Two brothers, named Alpheus an
Maron, are also recorded for their valour, and were Lac
dæmonians. Megistias a priest, by birth an Acarnania
and held in high honor at Sparta, refused to desert Le
onidas, though entreated by him to consult his safety
but sent away his only son, and remained himself be
hind to die with the Lacedæmonians.



xtus relates, that Leonidas drew up his men in
lest part of Thermopylæ; where, being encoun-
r the Persians, they fell with great numbers of
nies: but Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, and oth-
, t. at the Grecians attacked the very camp of
n the night. Both these dispositions are re-
le to probability. He might have made an at-
he Persian camp in the night, and in the morn-
drawn his forces back to Thermopylæ where
d be enabled to make the most obstinate resist-
l sell their lives upon the dearest terms. The
thus described by Diodorus. "The Grecians,
ow rejected all thoughts of safety, preferring
fe, unanimously called on their general to lead
inst the Persians, before they could be apprised
friends had passed round the mountains. Le-
braced the occasion, which the ready zeal of
rs afforded, and commanded them forthwith to
en, who were to sup in Elysium. Himself in
see of this command took a repast, as the
furnish strength for a long continuance, and
enseverance in danger. After a short refresh-
Grecians were now prepared, and received
assail the enemies in their camp, to put all
to the sword, and force a passage to the royal
when, formed into one compact body with Le-
nself at their head, they marched against the
and entered their camp at the dead of night.
rsians, wholly unprepared, and blindly con-
that their friends were defeated, and them-
cked by the united power of Greece, hurry
rom their tents with the utmost disorder and
tion. Many were slain by Leonidas and his
: much greater multitudes by their own troops
n the midst of this blind confusion they were
guishable from enemies; for as night took
power of discerning truly, and the tumult was
iversally over the camp, a prodigious slaugh-
naturally ensue. The want of command, of a



watch-word, and of confidence in themselves, reduced
Persians to such a state of confusion, that they dest
ed each other without distinction. Had Xerxes con
ued in the royal pavilion, the Grecians without diffic
ty might have brought the war to a speedy conclus
by his death; but he at the beginning of the tumult
took himself to flight with the utmost precipitati
when the Grecians, rushing into the tent, put to
sword most of those who were left behind: then, wh
night lasted, they ranged through the whole camp
diligent search of the tyrant. When morning appea
the Persians, perceiving the true state of things, h
the inconsiderable number of their enemies in conte
yet were so terrified at their valour, that they avoide
near engagement; but inclosing the Grecians on ev
side, showered their darts and arrows upon them at
distance, and in the end destroyed their whole body.
this manner fell the Grecians, who under the condu
of Leonidas defended the pass of Thermopylæ.
must admire the virtue of these men, who with c
consent, maintaining the post allotted by their count
cheerfully renounced their lives for the common saf
of Greece, and esteemed a glorious death more eligib
than to live with dishonor. Nor is the consternati
of the Persians incredible. Who among those Bar
rians could have conjectured such an event? Who co
have expected, that five hundred men would have da
to attack a million? Wherefore shall not all posterity
fleet on the virtue of these men, as the object of i
tation, who, though the loss of their lives was the nec
sary consequence of their undertaking, were yet unc
quered in their spirit; and among all the great nam
delivered down to remembrance, are the only hero
who obtained more glory in their fall, than others fr
the brightest victories? With justice may they be dee
ed the preservers of the Grecian liberty, even prefe
bly to those, who were conquerors in the battles foug
afterwards with Xerxes; for the memory of that valo
exerted in the defence of Thermopylæ, for ever dejo



thatians, while the Greeks were fired with
to equal such a pitch of magnanimity. Up-
nale, there never were any before these, who
n immortality through the meer excess of vir-
ce the praise of their fortitude hath not been
by historians only, but hath been celebrated
ns of poets, among others by Simonides the

ias, in his Laconics, considers the defence of
ylæ by Leonidas, as an action superior to any
by his cotemporaries, and to all the exploits
ling ages. "Never (says he) had Xerxes beheld
nd laid in ashes the city of Athens, had not
under Hydarnes been conducted through a
r mount Oeta; and, by that means encompass-
Greeks, overcome and slain Leonidas." Nor is
able, that such a commander at the head of
ps should have maintained his post in so nar-
s, till the whole army of Xerxes had perished
e. At the same time his navy had been misera-
ered by a storm, and worsted in an engagement
Athenians at Artemisium.

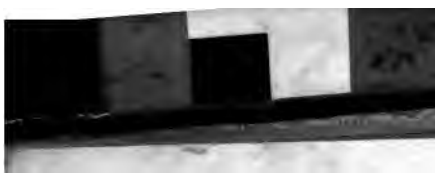
clude, the fall of Leonidas and his brave com-
so meritorious to their country, and so glorious
lves, hath obtained such a high degree of ven-
nd applause from passed ages, that few among
nt compilers of history have been silent on
ing instance of magnanimity, and zeal for li-
d many are the epigrams and inscriptions now
ome on the whole body, others on particulars,
at Thermopylæ, still preserving their memory
nation conversant with learning, and at this
of time still rendering their virtue the object
ition and of praise.

now detain the reader no longer, than to take
e occasion of expressing my sincere regard for



the Lord Viscount Cobham, and the sense of my obligations for the early honor of his friendship; to him I inscribe the following poem; and herein I should be justified, independent of all personal motives, from his Lordship's public conduct, so highly distinguished by his disinterested zeal, and unshaken fidelity to his country, not less in civil life, than in the field: to him therefore a poem, founded on a character eminent for military glory, and love of liberty, is due from the nature of the subject.

R. GLOVER.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK I.



THE ARGUMENT.

XERXES, king of Persia, having drawn together the whole force of his empire, and pass'd over the Hellespont into Thrace, with a design to conquer Greece, the deputies from the several states of that country, who had some time before assembled themselves at the Isthmus of Corinth, to deliberate on proper measures for resisting the invader, were no sooner apprized of his march into Thrace, than they determined without further delay to dispute his passage at the streights of Thermopylæ, the most accessible part of Greece on side of the Thrace and Thessaly. Alpheus, one of the deputies from Sparta, repairs to that city, and communicates this resolution to his countrymen; who chanced that day to be assembled in expectation of receiving an answer from Apollo, to whom they had sent a messenger to consult about the event of the war. Leutychides, one of their two kings, counsels the people to advance no farther than the Isthmus of Corinth, which separates the Peloponnesus, where Lacedæmon was situated, from the rest of Greece; but Leonidas, the other king, dissuades them from it. Agis, the messenger, who had been deputed to Delphi, and brother to the queen of Leonidas, returns with the oracle; which denounces ruin to the Lacedæmonians, unless one of their kings lays down his life for the public. Leonidas offers himself for the victim. Three hundred more are appointed, all citizens of Sparta, and heads of families, to accompany and die with him at Thremopylæ. Alpheus returns to the Isthmus. Leonidas, after an interview with his queen departs from Lacedæmon. At the end of six days he encamps near the Isthmus, when he is join'd by Alpheus; who describes the auxiliaries, then waiting at the Isthmus, those, who are already possessed of Thermopylæ, as also the pass itself; and concludes with relating the captivity of his brother Polydorus in Persia.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK I.

THE virtuous Spartan, who resign'd his life
To save his countiy at th' Oetæan streights,
Thermopylæ, when all the peopled east
In arms with Xerxes fill'd the Grecian plains,
O Muse, record. The Hellespont they pass'd,
O'erpow'ring Thrace. The dreadful tidings swift
To Corinth flew. Her Isthmus was the seat
Of Grecian council. Alpheus thence returns
To Lacedæmon. In assembly full
He finds the Spartan people with their kings;
Their kings, who boast an origin divine,
From Hercules descended. They the sons
Of Lacedæmon had conven'd to learn
The sacred mandates of th' immortal gods,
Tha tmorn expected from the Delphian dome.
But Alpheus sudden their attention drew,
And thus address'd them. 'For immediate war,
My countrymen, prepare. Barbarian tents
Already fill the trembling bounds of Thrace.
The Isthmian council hath decreed to guard
Thermopylæ, the Locrian gate of Greece.'

Here Alpheus paus'd. Leutychides, who shar'd
With great Leonidas the sway, uprose
And spake. 'Ye citizens of Sparta, hear.
Why from her bosom should Laconia send
Her valiant race to wage a distant war
Beyond the Isthmus? There the gods have plac'd
Our native barrier. In this favor'd land,
Which Pelops govern'd, us of Doric blood
That Isthmus inaccessible secures.
There let our standards rest. Your solid strength
If once you scatter in defence of states



Remote and feeble, you betray your own,
And merit Jove's derision.' With assent
The Spartans heard. Leonidas reply'd.

'O most ungen'rous counsel! Most unwise!
Shall we, confining to that Isthmian fence
Our efforts, leave beyond it ev'ry state
Disown'd, expos'd? Shall Athens, while her fleets
Unceasing watch th' innumerable foes,
And trust th' impending dangers of the field
To Sparta's well-known valour, shall she hear
That to Barbarian violence we leave
Her unprotected walls? Her hoary sires,
Her helpless matrons, and their infant race
To servitude and shame? Her guardian gods
Will yet preserve them. Neptune o'er his main
With Pallas, pow'r of wisdom, at their helms
Will soon transport them to a happier clime,
Safe from insulting foes, from false allies,
And eleuthrian Jove will bless their flight.
Then shall we feel the unresisted force
Of Persia's navy, deluging our plains
With inexhausted numbers. Half the Greeks,
By us betray'd to bondage, will support
A Persian lord, and lift th' avenging spear
For our destruction. But, my friends, reject
Such mean, such dang'rous counsels, which would blast
Your long-establish'd honors, and assist
The proud invader. O eternal king
Of gods and mortals, elevate our minds!
Each low and partial passion thence expel!
Greece is our gen'ral mother. All must join
In her defence, or sep'rate each must fall.

This said, authority and shame controll'd
The mute assembly. Agis too appear'd.
He from the Delphian cavern was return'd,
Where, taught by Phœbus on Parnassian cliffs,
The Pythian maid unfolded heav'n's decrees



He came, but discontent and grief o'ercast
His anxious brow. Reluctant was his tongue,
Yet seem'd full charg'd to speak. Religious dread
Each heart relax'd. On ev'ry visage hung
Sad expectation. Not a whisper told
The silent fear. Intensely all were fix'd,
All still, as death, to hear the solemn tale.
As o'er the western waves, when ev'ry storm
Is hush'd within its cavern, and a breeze,
Soft-breathing, lightly with its wings along
The slacken'd cordage glides, the sailor's ear
Perceives no sound throughout the vast expanse;
None, but the murmurs of the sliding prow,
Which slowly parts the smooth and yielding main:
So through the wide and listning croud no sound,
No voice, but thine, O Agis, broke the air;
While thus the issue of thy awful charge
Thy lips deliver'd. 'Spartans, in your name
I went to Delphi. I enquir'd the doom
Of Lacedæmon from th' impending war,
When in these words the deity reply'd.

"Inhabitants of Sparta, Persia's arms
"Shall lay your proud and ancient seat in dust;
"Unless a king, from Hercules deriv'd,
"Cause Lacedæmon for his death to mourn."

As, when the hand of Perseus had disclos'd
The snakes of dire Medusa, all, who view'd,
The Gorgon features, were congeal'd to stone,
With ghastly eyeballs, on the hero bent,
And horror, living in their marble form;
Thus with amazement rooted, where they stood,
In speechless terror frozen, on their kings
The Spartans gaz'd: but soon their anxious looks
All on the great Leonidas unite,
Long known his country's refuge. He alone
Remains unshaken. *Rising*, he displays
His god-like presence. Dignity and grace
Adorn his frame, where manly beauty joins



With strength Herculean. On his aspect shine
Sublimest virtue and desire of fame,
Where justice gives the laurel, in his eye
The inextinguishable spark, which fires
The souls of patriots; while his brow supports
Undaunted valour, and contempt of death.
Serene he cast his looks around and spake.

'Why this astonishment on ev'ry face,
Ye men of Sparta? Does the name of death
Create this fear and wonder? O my friends,
Why do we labour through the arduous paths,
Which lead to virtue? Fruitless were the toil,
Above the reach of human feet were plac'd
The distant summit; if the fear of death
Could intercept our passage. But a frown
Of unavailing terror he assumes
To shake the firmness of a mind which knows,
That, wanting virtue, life is pain and woe,
That, wanting liberty, ev'n virtue mourns,
And looks around for happiness in vain.
Then speak, O Sparta, and demand my life.
My heart, exulting, answers to thy call,
And smiles on glorious fate. To live with fame
The gods allow to many; but to die
With equal lustre is a blessing, Jove
Among the choicest of his boons reserves,
Which but on few his sparing hand bestows.'

Salvation thus to Sparta he proclaim'd.
Joy, wrapt awhile in admiration, paus'd,
Suspending praise; nor praise at last resounds
In high acclaim to rend the arch of heav'n:
A reverential murmur breathes applause.
So were the pupils of Lycurgus train'd
To bridle nature. Public fear was dumb
Before their senate, ephori and kings,
Nor exultation into clamour broke.
Amidst them rose Dioneces, and thus



'Haste to Thermopylæ. To Xerxes shew
The discipline of Spartans, long renown'd
In rigid warfare, with enduring minds,
Which neither pain, nor want, nor danger bend.
Fly to the gate of Greece, which open stands
To slavery and rapine. They will shrink
Before your standard, and their native seats
Resume in abject Asia. Arm, ye sires,
Who with a growing race have bless'd the state.
That race, your parents, gen'ral Greece forbid
Delay. Heav'n summons. Equal to the cause
A chief behold. Can Spartans ask for more?'

Bold Alpheus next. 'Command my swift return
Amid the Isthmian council to declare
Your instant march.' His dictates all approve.
Back to the Isthmus he unweary'd speeds.

Now from th' assembly with majestic steps
Forth moves their god-like king, with conscious worth
His gen'rous bosom glowing. Such the port
Of his divine progenitor; impell'd
By ardent virtue, so Alcides trod
Invincible to face in horrid war
The triple form of Geryon, or against
The bulk of huge Antæus match his strength.

Say, Muse, what heroes, by example fir'd,
Nor less by honor, offer'd now to bleed?
Dieneces the foremost, brave and staid,
Of vet'ran skill to range in martial fields
Well-order'd lines of battle. Marou next,
Twin-born with Alpheus, shews his manly frame.
Him Agis follow'd, brother to the queen
Of great Leonidas, his friend, in war
His try'd companion. Graceful were his steps,
And gentle his demeanour. Still his soul
Preserv'd the purest virtue, though refin'd
By arts unknown to Lacedæmon's race.
High was his office. He, when Sparta's weal



Support and counsel from the gods requir'd,
Was sent the hallow'd messenger to learn
Their mystic will, in oracles declar'd,
From rocky Delphi, from Dodona's shade,
Or sea-encircled Delos, or the cell
Of dark Trophonius, round Bœotia known.
Three hundred more compleat th' intrepid band,
Illustrious fathers all of gen'rous sons,
The future guardians of Laconia's state.
Then rose Megistias, leading forth his son,
Young Menalippus. Not of Spartan blood
Were they. Megistias, heav'n-enlighten'd seer,
Had left his native, Acarnanian shore;
Along the border of Eurotas chose
His place of dwelling. For his worth receiv'd,
And hospitably cherish'd, he the wreath
Pontific bore in Lacedæmon's camp,
Serene in danger, nor his sacred arm
From warlike toil secluding, nor untaught
To wield the sword, and poise the weighty spear.

But to his home Leonidas retir'd.
There calm in secret thought he thus explor'd
His mighty soul, while nature in his breast
A short emotion rais'd. 'What sudden grief,
What cold reluctance now unmans my heart,
And whispers, that I fear? Can death dismay
Leonidas; death, often seen and scorn'd,
When clad most dreadful in the battle's front?
Or to relinquish life in all its pride,
With all my honors, blooming round my head,
Repines my soul, or rather to forsake,
Eternally forsake my weeping wife,
My infant offspring, and my faithful friends?
Leonidas, awake. Shall these withstand
The public safety? Hark, thy country calls.
O sacred voice, I hear thee. At the sound
Reviving virtue brightens in my heart;
Fear vanishes before her. Death, receive



unreluctant hand. Immortal fame,
ou too, attendant on my righteous, fall,
th wings unweary'd wilt protect my tomb.'

His virtuous soul the hero had confirm'd.
hen Agis enter'd. 'If my tardy lips,'
thus began, 'have hitherto forborne
bring their grateful tribute of applause,
ich, as a Spartan, to thy worth I owe;
give the brother of thy queen. Her grief
ain'd me from thee. O unequall'd man,
ough Lacedæmon call thy prime regard,
get not her, sole victim of distress
id the gen'ral safety. To assuage
h pain fraternal tenderness is weak.'

The king embrac'd him, and reply'd. 'O best,
earest man, conceive not, but my soul
her is fondly bound, from whom my days
eir largest share of happiness deriv'd.
I, who yield my breath, lest others mourn,
t thousands should be wretched, when she pines,
re lov'd, than any, tho' less dear, than all.
I neglect her griefs? In future days,
hou with grateful memory record
name and fate, O Sparta, pass not this
needed by. The life, for thee resign'd,
ew not a painful hour to tire my soul,
were they common joys, I left behind.'

o spake the patriot, and his heart o'erflow'd
end'rest passion. Then in eager haste
faithful partner of his bed he sought.
id her weeping children sat the queen
ioveable and mute. Her swimming eyes
t to the earth. Her arms were folded o'er
lab'ring bosom, blotted with her tears.
when a dusky mist involves the sky,
moon through all the dreary vapours spreads



The radiant vesture of her silver light
O'er the dull face of nature; so the queen,
Divinely graceful shining through her grief,
Brighten'd the cloud of woe. Her lord approach'd.
Soon, as in gentlest phrase his well-known voice
Awak'd her drooping spirit, for a time
Care was appeas'd. She lifts her languid head.
She gives this utt'rance to her tender thoughts.

'O Thou, whose presence is my sole delight;
If thus, Leonidas, thy looks and words
Can check the rapid current of distress,
How am I mark'd for misery! How long!
When of life's journey less, than half, is pass'd,
And I must hear those calming sounds no more,
Nor see that face, which makes affliction smile.'

This said, returning grief o'erwhelms her breast.
Her orphan children, her devoted lord,
Pale, bleeding, breathless on the field of death,
Her ever-during solitude of woe,
All rise in mingled horror to her sight,
When thus in bitt'rest agony she spake.

'O whither art thou going from my arms!
Shall I no more behold thee! Oh! no more,
In conquest clad, o'erspread with glorious dust,
Wilt thou return to greet thy native soil;
And find thy dwelling joyful! Ah! too brave,
Why wouldst thou hurry to the dreary gates
Of death, uncall'd? Another might have bled,
Like thee a victim of Alcides' race,
Less dear to all, and Sparta been secure.
Now ev'ry eye with mine is drown'd in tears.
All with these babes lament a father lost.
Alas! how heavy is our lot of pain!
Our sighs must last, when every other breast
Exults in safety, purchased by our loss.
Thou didst not heed our anguish—didst not seek



or my instruction how to bear
'absence, or like thee to die.'

ble sorrow here confin'd
These words Leonidas return'd.

hare thy agony. My soul
how warm the prevalence of love,
a parent's feelings, till this hour;
once insensible to thee
rvour to assert my fame.
honours of my name been stain'd
n? Shameful life preferr'd
ious colleague would have left
ut what were infamy to shun,
o accept. Then deem no more,
love regardless, or thy tears,
all'd, to death. The voice of fate,
y fame, my country press my doom.
ir mourner! Wherefore swells afresh
woe? Leonidas must fall.
avier misery impends
d these, if soften'd by thy tears,
refuse to yield that breath,
e, glory, liberty and heav'n
y country, for my sons and thee.
y long unalter'd love. Reflect
rnal fondness. Hath my heart
a pause in love, or pious care?
at care, that tenderness be shewn
most faithful. When thy husband dies
non's safety, thou wilt share,
y children the diffusive good.
d by th' immortal gods
eople. Should my timid heart
charge abandon, I should plunge
shame, in sorrow. Thou wouldst mourn
læmon; wouldst with her sustain
l portion of oppression's weight.



Behold thy sons now worthy of their name.
Heir Spartan birth. Their growing bloom would pi
Depress'd, dishonour'd, and their youthful hearts
Beat at the sound of liberty no more.
On their own merit, on their father's fame,
When he the Spartan freedom hath confirm'd,
Before the world illustrious will they rise
Their country's bulwark, and their mother's joy.'

Here paus'd the patriot. In religious awe
Grief heard the voice of virtue. No complaint
The solemn silence broke. Tears ceas'd to flow;
Ceas'd for a moment soon again to stream.
Behold in arms before the palace drawn,
His brave companions of the war demand
Their leader's presence. Then her grief, renew'd
Surpassing utt'rance intercept her sighs.
Each accent freezes on her falt'ring tongue.
In speechless anguish on the hero's breast
She sinks. On ev'ry side his children press,
Hang on his knees, and kiss his honour'd hand:
His soul no longer struggles to confine
Her agitation. Down the hero's cheek,
Down flows the manly sorrow. Great in woe
Amid his children, who enclose him round,
He stands, indulging tenderness and love
In graceful tears, when thus with lifted eyes,
Address'd to heav'n. 'Thou ever-living pow'r,
Look down propitious, sire of gods and men!
O to this faithful woman, whose desert
May claim thy favour, grant the hours of peace!
And thou, my bright forefather, seed of Jove,
O Hercules, neglect not these thy race!
But since that spirit, I from thee derive,
Transports me from them to resistless fate,
Be thou their guardian! Teach them like thyself
By glorious labours to embellish life.
And free them father let them learn to die.



F. Cary sc.

speechless anguish, on the hero's breast
, sinks, On every side his children press,
ıg on his knees, and kiss his honour'd hand.

Leonidas, Book 1.





Here ending, forth he issues, and assumes
efore the ranks his station of command.
hey now proceed. So mov'd the host of heav'n
)n Phlegra's plains to meet the giant sons
)f Earth and Titan. From Olympus march'd
The deities embattled; while their king
Tow'r'd in the front with thunder in his grasp.
Thus through the streets of Lacedæmon pass'd
Leonidas. Before his footsteps bow
The multitude exulting. On he treads
Rever'd. Unsated, their enraptur'd sight
Pursues his graceful stature, and their tongues
Extol and hail him, as their guardian god.
Firm in his nervous hand he gripes the spear.
Low, as the ankles, from his shoulders hangs
The massy shield; and o'er his burnish'd helm
The purple plumage nods. Harmonious youths,
Around whose brows entwining laurels play,
In lofty-sounding strains his praise record;
While snowy-finger'd virgins all the way
Bestrew with od'rous garlands. Now his breast
Is all possess'd by glory, which dispell'd
Whate'er of grief remain'd, or vain regret
For those he left behind. The rev'rend train
Of Lacedæmon's senate last appear
To take their final, solemn leave, and grace
Their hero's parting steps. Around him flow
In civil pomp their venerable robes,
Mix'd with the blaze of arms. The shining troop
Of warriors press behind him. Maron here
With Menalippus warm in flow'ry prime,
There Agis, there Megistias, and the chief,
Dieneces. Laconia's dames ascend
The loftiest mansions; thronging o'er the roofs,
Applaud their sons, their husbands, as they march:
So parted Argo from th' Iolchian Strand
To plough the foaming surge. Thessalia's nymphs,
Rang'd on the cliffs, o'ershading Neptune's face,
Still on the *distant vessel* fix'd their eyes



Admiring, still in pæans bless'd the helm,
By Greece entrusted with her chosen sons
For high adventures on the Colchian shore.
Swift on his course Leonidas proceeds.
Soon is Eurotas pass'd, and Lerna's bank,
Where his victorious ancestor subdu'd
The many-headed Hydra, and the lake
To endless fame consign'd. Th' unweary'd bands
Next through the pines of Mænalus he led,
And down Parthenius urg'd the rapid toil.
Six days incessant was their march pursu'd,
When to their ear the hoarse-resounding waves
Beat on the Isthmus. Here the tents are spread.
Below the wide horizon then the sun
Had dipp'd his beamy locks. The queen of night
Gleam'd from the center of th' ethereal vault,
And o'er the raven plumes of darkness shed
Her placid light. Leonidas detains
Dieneces and Agis. Open stands
The tall pavilion, and admits the moon.
As here they sit conversing, from the hill,
Which rose before them, one of noble port
Is seen descending. Lightly down the slope
He treads. He calls aloud. They heard, they knew
The voice of Alpheus, whom the king address'd.

'O thou, with swiftness by the gods endu'd
To match the ardour of thy daring soul,
What from the Isthmus draws thee? Do the Greeks
Neglect to arm and face the public foe?'

'Good news gives wings, said Alpheus. Greece is arm'd.
The neighb'ring Isthmus holds th' Arcadian bands.
From Mantinea Diophantus leads
Five hundred spears; nor less from Tegea's walls
With Hegesander move. A thousand more,
Who in Orchomenus reside, and range
Along Parrhasius, or Cyllene's brow;
Who near the foot of Erymanthus dwell,



Or on Alphean banks, with various chiefs
Expect thy presence. Most is Clonius fam'd,
Of stature huge, unshaken rock of war.
Four hundred warriors brave Alemæon draws
From stately Corinth's tow'rs. Two hundred march
From Phlius. Them Eupalamus commands.
An equal number of Mycenæ's race
Aristobulus heads. Through fear alone
Of thee, and threat'ning Greece the Thebans arm.
A few in Thebes authority and rule
Usurp. Corrupted with Barbarian gold,
They quench the gen'rous, eleutherian flame
In ev'ry heart. The eloquent they bride.
By specious tales the multitude they cheat,
Establishing base measures on the plea
Of public safety. Others are immers'd
In all the sloth of plenty, who, unmov'd
In shameful ease, behold the state betray'd.
Aw'd by thy name, four hundred took the field.
The wily Anaxander is their chief
With Leontiades. To see their march
I staid, then hasten'd to survey the streights,
Which thou shalt render sacred to renown.'

Forever mingled with a crumbling soil,
Which moulders round th' indented Malian coast,
The sea rolls slimy. On a solid rock,
Which forms the inmost limit of a bay,
Thermopylæ is stretch'd. Where broadest spread'
It measures threescore paces, bounded here
By the salt ooze, which underneath presents
A dreary surface; there the lofty cliffs
Of woody'd Œta overlook the pass,
And far beyond o'er half the surge below
Their horrid umbrage cast. Across the mouth
An ancient bulwark of the Phocians stands,
A wall with gates and tow'rs The Locrian force
Was marching forward. Them I pass'd to greet
Demophilus of Thespia, who had pitch'd



Seven hundred spears before th' important fence.
His brother's son attends the rev'rend chief,
Young Dithyrambus. He for noble deeds,
Yet more for temperance of mind renown'd,
In early bloom with brightest honors shines,
Nor wantons in the blaze. Here Agis spake.

'Well hast thou painted that illustrious youth.
He is my host at Thespia. Though adorn'd
With various wreaths, by fame, by fortune bless'd,
His gentle virtues take from Envy's lips
Their blasting venom; and her baneful eye
Strives on his worth to smile.' In silence all
Again remain, when Alpheus thus proceeds.

'Platæa's chosen veterans I saw,
Small in their number, matchless in their fame.
Diomedon the leader. Keen his sword
At Marathon was felt, where Asia bled.
These guard Thermopylæ. Among the hills,
Unknown to strangers winds an upper streight,
Which by a thousand Phocians is secur'd.

Ere these brave Greeks I quitted, in the bay
A stately chieftain of th' Athenian fleet
Arriv'd. I join'd him. Copious in thy praise
He utter'd rapture, but austerely blam'd
Laconia's tardy counsels; while the ships
Of Athens long had stemm'd Eubœan tides,
Which flow not distant from our future post.
This was the far-fam'd Æschylus, by Mars,
By Phœbus lov'd. Parnassus him proclaims
The first of Attic poets, him the plains
Of Marathon a soldier, try'd in arms.'

'Well may Athenians murmur,' said the king.
'Too long hath Sparta slumber'd on her shield.
By morn beyond the Isthmus we will spread
A gen'rous banner. In Laconian strains



Of Alcman and Terpander lives the fame
Of our forefathers. Let our deeds attract
The brighter muse of Athens in the song
Of Æschylus divine. Now frame thy choice.
Share in our fate; or, hast'ning home, report,
How much already thy discerning mind,
Thy active limbs have merited from me,
How serv'd thy country. From th' impatient lips
Of Alpheus swift these fervid accents broke.

'I have not measur'd such a tract of land,
Have not, untir'd, beheld the setting sun,
Nor through the shade of midnight urg'd my steps
To animate the Grecians, that myself
Might be exempt from warlike toil, or death.
Return? Ah! no. A second time my speed
Shall visit thee, Thermopylæ. My limbs
Shall at thy side, Leonidas, obtain
An honorable grave. And oh! amid
His country's perils if a Spartan breast
May feel a private sorrow, fierce revenge
I seek not only for th' insulted state,
But for a brother's wrongs. A younger hope,
Than I, and Maron, bless'd our father's years,
Child of his age, and Polydorus nam'd.
His mind, while tender in his op'ning prime,
Was bent to strenuous virtue. Gen'rous scorn
Of pain, or danger taught his early strength
To struggle patient with severest toils.
Oft, when inclement winter chill'd the air,
When frozen show'rs had swoln Eurotas' stream,
Amid th' impetuous channel would he plunge
To breast the torrent. On a fatal day,
As in the sea his active limbs he bath'd,
A savage corsair of the Persian king
My brother naked and defenceless bore,
Ev'n in my sight, to Asia; there to waste
With all the promise of *its* growing worth
His *youth in bondage*. Tedious were the tale,



Should I recount my pains, my father's woes,
The days he wept, the sleepless nights he beat
His aged bosom. And shall Alpheus' spear
Be absent from Thermopylæ, nor claim,
O Polydorus, vengeance for thy wrongs
In that first slaughter of the barb'rous foe.'

Here interpos'd Dieneces. Their hands
He grasp'd, and cordial transport thus express'd.

'O that Lycurgus from the shades might rise
To praise the virtue, which his laws inspire!'

Thus till the dead of night these heroes pass'd
The hours in friendly converse, and enjoy'd
Each other's virtue. Happiest of men!
At length with gentle heaviness the pow'r
Of sleep invades their eyelids, and constrains
Their magnanimity and zeal to rest;
When, sliding down the hemisphere, the moon
Immers'd in midnight shade her silver head.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK II.



THE ARGUMENT.

LEONIDAS on his approach to the Isthmus, is met by the leaders of the troops, sent from other Grecian states, and by the deputies, who composed the Isthmian council. He harangues them; then proceeds in conjunction with these forces, towards Thermopylæ. On the first day he is joined by Dithyrambus; on the third he reaches a valley in Locris, where he is entertained by Oileus, the public host, of the Lacedæmonian state; and the next morning is accompanied by him in a car to the temple of Pan: he finds Medon there, the son of Oileus, and commander of two thousand Locrians, already posted at Thermopylæ, and by him is informed that the army of Xerxes is in sight of the pass.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK II.

ORA spreads her purple beams around,
ove the Spartans. Their approach is known.
mian council, and the diff'rent chiefs,
d th' auxiliar bands, advance to meet
; Eupalamus the strong,
ı, Clonius, Diophantus brave
gesander. At their head is seen
lus, whom Mycenæ's ranks
·cenæ once august in pow'r,
id wealth, and vaunting still the name
emnon. To Laconia's king
ftain spake. Leonidas, survey
s race. Should ev'ry other Greek
oy Xerxes, and his eastern host,
ot, we can fear, deriv'd from those,
e conducted o'er the foaming surge
ıgth of Greece; who desert left the fields
'd Asia, and her proudest walls
ir foundations levell'd to the ground."

ıs replies not, but his voice
ı all. "Illustrious warriors, hail!
undaunted signalize your faith,
'rous ardour in the common cause.
whose counsels prop the Grecian state,
le synod, who consign
otecting sword, the gate of Greece,
il! Whate'er by valour we obtain,
om must preserve. With piercing eyes
ate ev'ry city, and discern
ious tempers. Some with partial care
their own neglect the public weal,
and cold are others. Terror here,



Corruption there presides. O fire the brave
To gen'ral efforts in the gen'ral cause.
Confirm the wav'ring. Animate the cold,
The timid. Watch the faithless. Some betray
Themselves and Greece. Their perfidy prevent,
Or call them back to honor. Let us all
Be link'd in sacred union, and this land
May face the world's whole multitude in arms.
If for the spoil, by Paris borne to Troy,
A thousand keels the Hellespont o'erspread;
Shall not again confederated Greece
Be rous'd to battle, and to freedom give
What once she gave to fame? Behold, we haste
To stop th' invading tyrant. Till we fall,
He shall not pour his myriads on your plains.
But as the gods conceal, how long our strength
May stand unvanquish'd, or how soon may yield;
Waste not a moment, till consenting Greece
Range all her free-born numbers in the field.'

Leonidas concluded. Awful stepp'd
Before the sage assembly one supreme
And old in office, who address'd the king.

'Thy bright example ev'ry heart unites.
From thee her happiest omens Greece derives
Of concord, safety, liberty and fame.
Go then, O first of mortals, go, impress
Amaze and terror on the barb'rous host;
The free-born Greeks instructing life to deem
Less dear, than honor, and their country's cause.'

This heard, Leonidas thy secret soul,
Exulting, tasted of the sweet reward
Due to thy name through endless time. Once m
His eyes he turn'd, and view'd in rapt'rous though
His native land, which he alone can save;
Then summon'd all his majesty, and o'er
The Isthmus tr od. The phalanx move behind

In deep arrangement. So th' imperial ship
With stately bulk along the heaving tide
In military pomp conducts the pow'r
Of some proud navy, bounding from the port
To bear the vengeance of a mighty state
Against a tyrant's walls. Till sultry noon
They march; when halting, as they take repast,
Across the plain before them they descry
A troop of Thespians. One above the rest
In eminence precedes. His glitt'ring shield,
Whose gold-emblazon'd orb collects the beams,
Cast by meridian Phœbus from his throne,
Flames like another sun. A snowy plume,
With wanton curls disporting in the breeze,
Floats o'er his dazzling casque. On nearer view
Beneath the radiant honours of his crest
A countenance of youth in rosy prime,
And manly sweetness won the fix'd regard
Of each beholder. With a modest grace
He came respectful tow'rd the king, and shew'd,
That all ideas of his own desert
Were sunk in veneration. So the god
Of light salutes his empyreal sire;
When from his altar in th' embow'ring grove
Of palmy Delos, or the hallow'd bound
Of Tenedos, or Claros, where he hears
In hymns his praises from the sons of men,
He reascends the high, Olympian seats:
Such reverential homage on his brow,
O'ershading, softens his effulgent bloom
With loveliness and grace. The king receives
Th' illustrious Thespian thus. 'My willing tongue
Would style thee Dithyrambus. Thou dost bear
All in thy aspect to become that name
Renown'd for worth and valour. O reveal
Thy birth, thy charge. Whoe'er thou art, my soul
Desires to know thee, and would call thee friend.'

To him the youth. 'O bulwark of our weal,
My name is Dithyrambus; which the lips



Of some benevolent some gen'rous friend
To thee have sounded in a partial strain,
And thou hast heard with favour. In thy sight
I stand, deputed by the Thespian chief,
The Theban, Locrian, by the fam'd in war;
Diomedon, to hasten thy approach.
Three days will bring the hostile pow'rs in view

He said. The ready standards are uprear'd.
By zeal enfore'd, till ev'ning shadows fall,
The march continues, then by day-spring sweeps
The earliest dews. The van, by Agis led,
Displays the grisly face of battle rough
With spears, obliquely trail'd in dreadful length
Along th' indented way. Beside him march'd
His gallant, Thespian host. The center boasts
Leonidas the leader, who retains
The good Megistias near him. In the rear
Dieneces commanded, who in charge
Kept Menalippus, offspring of his friend,
For these instructions. 'Let thine eye, young man
Dwell on the order of our varying march;
As champaign, valley, mountain, or defile
Require a change. The eastern tyrant thus
Conducts not his Barbarians like the sands
In number. Yet the discipline of Greece
They will encounter feeble as the sands,
Dash'd on a rock, and scatter'd in their fall.'

To him th' enquiring youth. 'The martial tread,
The flute's slow warble, both in just accord,
Entrance my senses; but let wonder ask,
Why is that tender vehicle of sound
Preferr'd in war by Sparta? Other Greeks
To more sonorous music rush in fight'.

'Son of my friend,' Dieneces rejoins,
Well dost thou note. I praise thee. Sparta's law
With human passions, source of human woes,



Maintains perpetual strife. She sternly curbs
Our infant hearts, till passion yields its seat
To principal and order. Music too,
By Spartans lov'd, is temper'd by the law;
Still to her plan subservient melts in notes,
Which cool and sooth, not irritate and warm.
Thus by habitual abstinence, apply'd
To ev'ry sense, suppressing nature's fire,
By modes of duty, not by ardour sway'd,
O'er each impetuous enemy abroad,
At home o'er vice and pleasure we prevail.'

'O might I merit a Laconian name!'
The Arcanian answer'd. 'But explain,
What is the land, we traverse? What the hill,
Whose parted summit in a spacious void
Admits a bed of clouds? And gracious tell,
Whose are those suits of armour, which I see
Borne by two Helots.' At the questions pleas'd,
Dieneces continues. 'Those belong
To Alpheus and his brother. Light of foot
They, disencumber'd, all at large precede
This pond'rous band. They guide a troop of slaves,
Our missile-weapon'd Helots, to observe,
Provide, forewarn, and obstacles remove.
This tract is Phocis. That divided hill
Is fam'd Parnassus. Thence the voice divine
Was sent by Phœbus, summoning to death
The king of Sparta. From his fruitful blood
A crop will spring of victory to Greece.'

'And these three hundred high in birth and rank,
All citizens of Sparta' —— cries the youth,
'They all must bleed,' Dieneces subjoins,
'All with their leader. So the law decrees.'

To him with earnest looks the gen'rous youth.
'Wilt thou not place me in that glorious hour
Close *to thy banker? Gratitude* will brace

Thy pupil's arm to manifest the force
Of thy instruction.' 'Menalippus, no,'
Return'd the chief. 'Not thou o Spartan breed,
Nor call'd to perish. Thou unwedded too
Wouldst leave no race behind thee. Live to praise,
Live to enjoy our solitary fall.
Reply is needless. See, the sun descends.
The army halts. I trust thee with a charge,
Son of Megistias. In my name command
Th' attendant Helots to erect our camp.
We pitch our tents in Locris.' Quick the youth
His charge accomplish'd. From a gen'rous meal,
Where at the call of Alpheus Locris show'r'd
Her Amalthean plenty on her friends,
The sated warriors soon in slumber lose
The memory of toil. His watchful round
Dieneces with Menalippus takes.

The moon rode high and clear. Her light benign
To their pleas'd eyes a rural dwelling shew'd,
All unadorn'd, but seemly. Either side
Was fenc'd by trees high-shadowing. The front
Look'd on a crystal pool, by feather'd tribes
At ev'ry dawn frequented. From the springs
A small redundance fed a shallow brook,
O'er smoothest pebbles rippling just to wake,
Not startle silence, and the ear of night
Entice to listen undisturb'd. Around,
The grass was cover'd by reposing sheep,
Whose drowsy guard no longer bay'd the moon.

The warriors stopp'd, contemplating the seat
Of rural quiet. Suddenly a swain
Steps forth. His fingers touch the breathing reed.
Uprise the fleecy train. Each faithful dog
Is rous'd. All heedful of the wonted sound
Their known conductor follow. Slow behind
Th' observing warriors move. Ere long they reach
A broad and verdant circle, thick enclos'd



With birches straight and tall, whose glossy rind
Is clad in silver from Diana's car,
The ground was holy, and the central spot
An altar bore to Pan. Beyond the orb
Of screening trees th' external circuit swarm'd
With sheep and beeves, each neighb'ring hamlet's wealth
Collected. Thither soon the swain arriv'd,
Whom by the name of Melibœus hail'd,
A peasant throng surrounded. As their chief,
He nigh the altar to his rural friends
Address'd these words. 'O sent from diff'rent lords
With contribution to the public wants,
Time presses. God of peasants, bless our course!
Speed to the slow-pace'd ox, for once impart!
That o'er these vallies, cool'd by dewy night,
We to our summons true, ere noon-tide blaze,
May join Oileus, and his praise obtain.'

He ceas'd. To rustic madrigals and pipes,
Combin'd with bleating notes, and tinkling bells,
With clamor shrill from busy tongues of dogs,
Or hollow-sounding hoofs the deep-mouth'd ox,
Along the valley, lengthened flocks are driv'n
Somewhile, looking off to harmless spoil
Of fine-eared hinds, or springing in their sight,
While [illegible]'d with malice.
The [illegible], unseen in shade,
Discuss applauded, and the youth
Of Menalippus cautious. 'Let no word
Impede the careful peasant. On his charge
Depends our welfare. Diligent and staid
He suits his godlike master. Thou wilt see
That righteous hero soon. Now sleep demands
Our debt to nature.' On a carpet dry
Of moss, beneath a wholesome beech they lay,
Arm'd, as they were. Their slumber short retires
With night's last shadow. At their warning rous'd,
The troops pressed. Th' admiring eye of youth

In Menalippus caught the morning rays
To guide its travel o'er the landscape wide
Of cultivated hillocks, dales and lawns,
Where mansions, hamlets interpos'd ; where dom
Rose to their gods through consecrated shades.
He then exclaims. 'O say, can Jove devote
These fields to ravage, those abodes to flames ?'

The Spartan answers—'Ravage, sword and fire
Must be endur'd, as incidental ills.
Suffice it, these invaders soon, or late,
Will leave this soil more fertile by their blood
With spoils abundant to rebuild the fanes.
Precarious benefits are these, thou seest,
So fram'd by heav'n ; but virtue is a good,
No foe can spoil, and lasting to the grave.'

Beside the public way an oval fount
Of marble sparkled with a silver spray
Of falling rills, collected from above.
The army halted, and their hollow casques
Dipp'd in the limpid streams that round it rose
An edifice, compos'd of native [illegible],
And oaken trunks of knotted girth unwrought,
Within were beds of moss. Old, batter[illegible]
Hung from the roof. The curious chief [illegible]
These words, engraven on a tablet rude,
Megistias reads ; the rest in silence hear.
' Yon marble fountain, by Oileus plac'd,
To thirsty lips in living waters flows ;
For weary steps he fram'd this cool retreat ;
A grateful off'ring here to rural peace,
His dinted shield, his helmet he resign'd.
O passenger, if born to noble deeds
Thou wouldst obtain perpetual grace from Jove,
Devote thy vigour to heroic toils,
And thy decline to hospitable cares.
Rest here ; then seek Oileus in his vale.'



'O Jove, burst forth Leonidas, thy grace
Is large and various. Length of days and bliss
To him thou giv'st, to me a shorten'd term,
Nor yet less happy. Grateful we confess
Thy diff'rent bounties, measur'd full to both.
Come let us seek Oileus in his vale.'

The word is giv'n. The heavy phalanx moves.
The light-pac'd Helots long, ere morning dawn'd,
Had recommene'd their progress. They o'ertook
Blithe Melibœus in a spacious vale,
The fruitfullest in Locris, ere the sun
Shot forth his noon-tide beams. On either side
A surface scarce perceptibly ascends.
Luxuriant vegetation crouds the soil
With trees close-rang'd and mingling. Rich the loads
Of native fruitage to the sight reveal
Their vig'rous nurture. There the flushing peach,
The apple, citron, almond, pear and date,
Pomegranates, purple mulberry, and fig,
From interlacing branches mix their hues
And scents, the passenger's delight; but leave
In the mid-vale a pasture long and large,
Exuberant in vivid verdure cropp'd
By herds, by flocks, innum'rous. Neighb'ring knolls
Are speckled o'er with cots, whose humble roofs
To herdsmen, shepherds, and laborious hinds
Once yielded rest unbroken, till the name
Of Xerxes shook their quiet. Yet this day
Was festive. Swains and damsels, youth and age,
From toil, from home enlarg'd, disporting, fill'd
Th' enliven'd meadow. Under ev'ry shade
A hoary minstrel sat; the maidens danc'd;
Flocks bleated; oxen low'd; the horses neigh'd;
With joy the vale resounded; terror fled;
Leonidas was nigh. The welcome news
By Melibœus, hast'ning to his lord,
Was loudly told. The Helots too appear'd.
While with his brother Alpheus thus discours'd—

'In this fair valley old Oileus dwells
The first of Locrians, of Laconia's state
The public host. Yon large pavillions mark
They promise welcome. Thither let us bend,
There tell our charge.' This said, they both advance
A hoary band receives them. One, who seem'd
In rank, in age superior, wav'd his hand
To Meliboeus, standing near, and spake—

'By this my faithful messenger I learn,
That you are friends. Nor yet th' invader's foot
Hath pass'd our confines. Else, o'ercast by time,
My sight would scarce distinguish friend, or foe,
A Grecian, or Barbarian.' Alpheus then—

'We come from Lacedæmon, of our king
Leonidas forerunners.' 'Is he nigh?'
The cordial senior tenderly exclaims.
'I am Oileus. Him a beardless boy
I knew in Lacedæmon. Twenty years
Are since elaps'd. He scarce remembers me.
But I will feast him, as becomes my zeal,
Him and his army. You, my friends, repose.'

They sit. He still discourses— 'Spartan guest
In me an aged soldier you behold.
From Ajax, fam'd in Agamemnon's war,
Oilean Ajax flows my vital stream,
Unmix'd with his presumption. I have borne
The highest functions in the Locrian state,
Not with dishonor. Self-dismiss'd, my age
Hath in this valley on my own demesne
Liv'd tranquil, not recluse. My comrades these,
Old magistrates and warriors like myself,
Releas'd from public care, with me retir'd
To rural quiet. Through our last remains
Of time in sweet garrulity we slide,
Recounting pass'd achievements of our prime;
Nor wanting lib'ral means for lib'ral deeds,

..., we accept a charge,
...e well-suited. By our watchful care
The goddess Plenty in your tents shall dwell.'

He scarce had finish'd, when the ensigns broad
Of Lacedæmon's phalanx down the vale
Were seen to wave, unfolding at the sound
Of flutes, soft-warbling in th' expressive mood
Of Dorian sweetness, unadorn'd. Around,
In notes of welcome ev'ry shepherd tun'd
His sprightly reed. The damsels shew'd their hair,
Diversify'd with flowrets. Garlands gay,
Rush-woven baskets, glowing with the dies
Of amaranths, of jasmin, roses, pinks
And violets they carry, tripping light
Before the steps of grimly-featur'd Mars
To blend the smiles of Flora with his frown.
Leonidas they chaunt in silvan lays,
Him the defender of the meads and groves,
Him more, than Pan, a guardian to their flocks.
While Philomela, in her poplar shade
Awaken'd, strains her emulating throat,
And joins with liquid trills the swelling sound.

Behold Oilæus ...

The favor'd district! May thy rev'rei
Have peaceful shelter in thy father's
Kind heav'n, that merit to my sword

By joy uplifted, forth Oileus brok
Thou dost reeal me then! O sent to
These fruits from spoil, these hoary
Permit thy weary'd soldiers to partak
Of Locrian plenty. Enter thou my t
Thou and thy captains. I salute the

The hero full of dignity and years,
Once bold in action, but plac'd now in
Ev'n by his look, benignly cast aroun
Gives lassitude relief. With native g
With heart-effus'd complacency, the k
Accepts the lib'ral welcome; while his
To relaxation and repast dismiss'd,
Pitch on the wounded green their bri

Still is the evening. Under chesnu
With interweaving poplars spacious
A well-fram'd tent. There calm the h
The genial board enjoy, and feast the



'Come, Meliboeus, it is surely time,
That my repeated gift, the name of friend
Thou shouldst accept The name of bondman wounds
My ear. Be free. No longer, best of men,
Reject that boon, nor let my feeble head,
To thee a debtor, as to gracious heav'n,
Descend and sleep unthankful in the grave.
Though yielding nature daily feels decay;
Thou dost prevent all care. The gods estrange
Pain from my pillow, have secur'd my breast
From weeds too oft in aged soils profuse,
From self-tormenting petulance and pride,
From jealousy and envy at the fame
Of younger men. Leonidas will dim
My former lustre, as that silver orb
Outshines the meanest star; and I rejoice.
O Meliboeus, these elect of Jove
To certain death advance. Immortal pow'rs!
How social, how endearing is their speech!
How flow in lib'ral cheerfulness their hearts!
To such a period verging, men like these
Age well may envy, and that envy take
The genuine shape of virtue. Let their span
Of earthly beings, while it lasts, contain
Each earthly joy. Till bless'd Elysium spread
Her ever blooming, inexhausted stores
To their glad sight, be mine the grateful task
To drain my plenty. From the vaulted caves
Our vessels large of well-fermented wine,
From all our gran'ries lift the treasur'd corn.
Go, load the groaning axles. Nor forget
With garments new to greet Melissa's nymphs.
To her a triple change of vestments bear
With twenty lambs, and twenty speckled kids.
Be it your care, my peasants, some to aid
Him your director, others to select
Five hundred oxen, thrice a thousand sheep,
Of lusty swains a thousand. Let the morn,
When first she blushes, see my will perform'd.'



'They heard. Their lord's injunctions to fulfil
Was their ambition. He, unresting, mounts
A ready car. The coursers had enroll'd
His name in Isthmian and Nemean games.
By moon-light, floating on the splendid reins,
He, o'er the busy vale intent, is borne
From place to place, o'erlooks, directs, forgets
That he is old. Mean time the shades of night
Retiring, wake Dieneces. He gives
The word. His pupil seconds. Ev'ry band
Is arm'd. Day opens. Sparta's king appears.
Oileus greets him. In his radiant car
The senior stays reluctant; but his guest
So wills, in Spartan reverence to age.
Then spake the Locrian. 'To assist thy camp
A chosen band of peasants I detach.
I trust thy valour. Doubt not thou my care;
Nor doubt that swain.' Oileus, speaking, look'd
On Melibœus. Skilful he commands
These hinds. 'Him wise, him faithful I have prov'd
More than Eumæus to Laertes' son.
To him th' Œtæan woods, their devious tracks
Are known, each rill and fountain. Near the pass
Two thousand Locrians wilt thou find encamp'd,
My eldest born their leader, Medon nam'd,
Well-exercis'd in arms. My daughter dwells
On Œta. Sage Melissa she is call'd,
Enlighten'd priestess of the tuneful nine.
She haply may accost thee. Thou wilt lend
An ear. Not fruitless are Melissa's words.
Now, servants, bring the sacred wine.' Obey'd,
He, from his seat uprising, thus proceeds—

'Lo! from this chalice a libation pure
To Mars, to Grecian liberty and laws,
To their protector, eleutherian Jove,
To his nine daughters, who record the brave,
To thy renown, Leonidas, I pour;
And take an old man's benediction too.



He stopp'd. Affection, struggling in his heart,
Burst forth again. 'Illustrious guest, afford
Another hour. That slender space of time
Yield to my sole possession. While the troops,
Already glitt'ring down the dewy vale,
File through its narrow'd outlet; near my side
Deign to be carry'd, and my talk endure.'

The king, well-pleas'd, ascends. Slow move the steeds
Behind the rear. Oileus grasps his hand,
Then in the fulness of his soul pursues.

'Thy veneration for Laconia's laws
That I may strengthen, may to rapture warm,
Hear me display the melancholy fruits
Of lawless will. When o'er the Lydian plains
Th' innumerable tents of Xerxes spread,
His vassal, Pythius, who in affluent means
Surpasses me, as that Barbarian prince
Thou dost in virtue, entertain'd the host,
And proffer'd all his treasures. These the king
Refusing, ev'n augmented from his own.
An act of fancy, not habitual grace.
A sparkling vapour through the regal gloom
Of cruelty and pride. He now prepar'd
To march from Sardis, when with humble tears
The good old man besought him. Let the king
Propitious hear a parent. In thy train
I have five sons. Ah! leave my eldest born,
Thy future vassal, to sustain my age!'
The tyrant fell reply'd. 'Presumptuous man,
Who art my slave, in this tremendous war,
Is not my person hazarded, my race,
My consort? Former merit saves from death
Four of thy offspring. Him, so dearly priz'd
Thy folly hath destroy'd. His body straight
Was hewn asunder. By the public way
On either side a bleeding half was cast,
And millions pass'd between. O Spartan king,

Each eminence is loaded thick with
From cots, from ev'ry hamlet pour'd
To bless thy steps, to celebrate thy p

Oftimes the king his decent brow i
Mute and obsequious to an elder's vo
Which through th' instructed ear, un
In eloquence and knowledge. Scarce
Was fled. The narrow dale was left
A causeway broad disclos'd an ancien
Of military fame. A trophy large,
Compact with erected morions, targe
With spears and corselets, dimm'd by
Stood near a lake pellucid, smooth, p
Of circular expanse; whose bosom she
A green-slop'd island, figur'd o'er witl
And from its center lifting high to vi
A marble chapel, on the massy streng
Of Doric columns rais'd. A full-wrou
Display'd the sculptor's art. In solen
Of obelisks and busts, and story'd urns
Sepulchral mansions of illustrious dea
Were scatter'd round, o'ercast with shi
Of yew and cypress. In a



A race more pious on th' Oilean house
Felicity have drawn. To ev'ry god
I owe my bliss, my early fame to Pan.
Once on the margin of that silent pool
In their nocturnal camp Barbarians lay,
Awaiting morn to violate the dead,
My youth was fir'd. I summon'd from their cots
A rustic host. We sacrific'd to Pan,
Assail'd th' unguarded ruffians in his name.
He with his terrors smote their yielding hearts.
Not one surviv'd the fury of our swains.
Rich was the pillage. Hence that trophy rose;
Of costly blocks constructed, hence that fane,
Inscrib'd to Pan th' armipotent. O king,
Be to an old man's vanity benign.
This frowning emblem of terrific war
Proclaims the ardour and exploits of youth.
This to barbarian strangers, ent'ring Greece,
Shews, what I was. The marble fount, thou saw'st,
Of living water, whose transparent flow
Reliev'd thy march in yester sultry sun,
The cell, which offer'd rest on beds of moss,
Shew, what *I* am; to Grecian neighbours shew
The hospitality of age. O age,
Where are thy graces, but in lib'ral deeds,
In bland deportment? Would thy furrow'd cheeks
Lose the deformity of time? Let smiles
Dwell in thy wrinkles. Then, rever'd by youth,
Thy feeble steps will find' Abruptly here
He paus'd. A manly warrior full in sight
Beside the trophy on his target lean'd,
Unknown to Sparta's leader, who address'd
His rev'rend host. 'Thou pausest. Let me ask,
Whom do *I* see, resembling in his form
A demigod?' In transport then the sage.

'It is my son, discover'd by his shield,
Thy brave auxiliar, Medon. He sustains
My ancient honors in his native state,

my long and happy course should finish

The chariot rested. Medon now app
Saluting thus Leonidas. 'O king
Of warlike Sparta, Xerxes' host in sigh
Begin to spread their multitude, and fi
The spacious Malian plain.' The king

'Accept, illustrious messenger, my th
With such a brave assistant, as the son
Of great Oileus, more assur'd I go
To face those numbers.' With his god
The father, now dismounting from his c
Embraces Medon. In a sliding bark
They all are wafted to the island fane,
Erected by Oileus, and enrich'd
With his engrav'd achievements. Then
Of Sparta's gen'ral in extensive scope
Contemplates each battalion, as they wi
Along the pool; whose limpid face reflec
Their weapons, glist'ning in the early su
Them he to Pan armipotent commends,
His favor thus invoking. 'God, whose p
By rumour vain, or Echo's empty voice

ree with the god,
ently remov'd. The good old chief
arpets, rais'd by tender, menial hands,
in the secret sanctuary is laid.

s hast'ning step Leonidas restrains,
fervent prays. 'O Maia's son, best pleased,
n calling slumber to a virtuous eye,
ch o'er my venerable friend. Thy balm
rants, exhausted by his love to me.
t sleep, thou soft'nest that intruding pang,
h gen'rous breasts, so parting, must admit.'

said, embark'd. relanded. To his side
g Medon, he rejoin'd the host.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK III.



THE ARGUMENT.

Leonidas arrives at Thermopylæ about noon, on the fourth day after his departure from the Isthmus. He is received by Demophilus, the commander of Thespia, and by Anaxander the Theban, treacherously recommending Epialtes, a Malian, who seeks by a pompous description of the Persian power to intimidate the Grecian leaders, as they are viewing the enemy's camp from the top of mount Oeta. He is answered by Dieneces and Diomedon. Xerxes sends Tigranes and Phraortes to the Grecian camp, who are dismissed by Leonidas, and conducted back by Dithyrambus and Diomedon; which last, incensed at the arrogance of Tigranes, treats him with contempt and menaces. This occasions a challenge to single combat between Diomedon and Tigranes, Dithyrambus and Phraortes. Epialtes after a conference with Anaxander, declares his intention of returning to Xerxes. Leonidas dispatches Agis with Meliboeus, a faithful slave of Oileus, and high in the estimation of his lord, to view a body of Phocians, who had been posted at a distance from Thermopylæ for the defence of another pass in mount Oeta.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK III.

NOW in the van Leonidas appears,
With Medon still conferring. 'Hast thou heard,'
He said, 'among th' innumerable foes
What chiefs are most distinguish'd?' 'Might we trust
To fame, reply'd the Locrian, Xerxes boasts
His ablest, bravest, counsellor and chief,
In Artemisia, Caria's matchless queen.
To old Darius benefits had bound
Her lord, herself to Xerxes. Not compell'd,
Except by magnanimity, she leads
The best appointed squadron of his fleet.
No female softness Artemisia knows,
But in maternal love. Her widow'd hand
With equity and firmness for her son
Administers the sway. Of Doric race
Still she retains the spirit, which from Greece
Her ancestors transplanted. Other chiefs
Are all Barbarians, little known to fame,
Save one, whom Sparta hath herself supply'd,
Not less, than Demaratus, once her king,
An exile now.' Leonidas rejoins.

'Son of Oileus, like thy father wise,
Like him partake my confidence. Thy words
Reveal an æra, sad'ning all my thoughts.
That injur'd Spartan shar'd the regal sway
With one—Alas! my brother, eldest born,
Unbless'd by nature, favor'd by no god,
Cleomenes. Insanity of mind,
Malignant passions, impious acts deform'd
A life, concluded by his own fell hand.
Against his colleague envious he suborn'd

...connectional friendship. Let
The gloomy theme. Thermopylæ
Each face in transport glows. Now
His tow'ring forehead. With impa
On rush'd the phalanx, sounding pa
As if the present deity of fame
Had from the summit shewn her daz
With wreaths unfading on her temp
Her adamantine trumpet in her ha
To celebrate the valour. From the
Leonidas advances like the sun,
When through dividing clouds his p
Their sweeping rack, and stills the cl
The army silent halt. Their ensign
The air no longer. Motionless their
His eye reveals the ardour of his sou
Which thus finds utt'rance from his

'All hail! Thermopylæ, and you, t
Presiding here. All hail! ye silvan g
Ye fountain nymphs, who send your
In broken murmurs down the rugge
Receive us, O benignant, and suppor
The cause of Greece. Conceal the s



Your hearts; exert the vigour of your arms:
That in the bosoms of the brave and free
Your memorable actions may survive;
May sound delightful in the ear of time,
Long as blue Neptune beats the Malian strand,
Or those tall cliffs erect their shaggy tops
So near to heav'n, your monuments of fame!'

As in some torrid region, where the head
Of Ceres bends beneath her golden load;
If from a burning brand a scatter'd spark
Invade the parching ground; a sudden blaze
Sweeps o'er the crackling champaign: through his host
Not with less swiftness to the furthest ranks
The words of great Leonidas diffus'd
A more than mortal fervour. Ev'ry heart
Distends with thoughts of glory, such as raise
The patriot's virtue, and the soldier's fire;
When danger most tremendous in his form
Seems in their sight most lovely. On their minds
Imagination pictures all the scenes
Of war, the purple field, the heaps of dead,
The glitt'ring trophy, pil'd with Persian arms.

But lo! the Grecian leaders, who before
Were station'd near Thermopylæ, salute
Laconia's king. The Thespian chief, ally'd
To Dithyrambus, first the silence breaks,
An ancient warrior. From behind his casque,
Whose crested weight his aged temples bore,
The slender hairs, all-silver'd o'er by time,
Flow'd venerably down. He thus began—

'Joy now shall crown the period of my days;
And whether nigh my father's urn I sleep;
Or, slain by Persia's sword, embrace the earth,
Our common parent; be it, as the gods
Shall best determine. For the present hour
I bless their bounty, which hath giv'n my age

To see the brave Leonidas, and bid
That hero welcome on this glorious shore
To fix the basis of the Grecian weal.'—

Here too the crafty Anaxander spake—
'Of all the Thebans we, rejoicing, hail
The king of Sparta. We obey'd his call.
O may oblivion o'er the shame of Thebes
A dark'ning veil extend! or those alone
By fame be curs'd, whose impious counsels turn
Their countrymen from virtue! Thebes was sunk,
Her glory bury'd in dishonest sloth.
To wake her langour gen'rous Alpheus came,
The messenger of freedom. O accept
Our grateful hearts, thou Alpheus, art the cause,
That Anaxander from his native gates
Not single joins this host, nor tamely these,
My chosen friends, behind their walls remain.
Enough of words. Time presses. Mount, ye chiefs,
This loftiest part of Œta. This o'erlooks
The streights, and far beyond their northern mouth
Extends our sight across the Malian plain.
Behold the native, Epialtes call'd,
Who with a foe from Thracia's bounds hath march'd!'

Disguis'd in seeming worth, he ended here.
The camp not long had Epialtes reach'd,
By race a Malian. Eloquent his tongue,
His heart was false and abject. He was skill'd
To grace perfidious counsels, and to clothe
In swelling phrase the baseness of his soul,
Foul nurse of treasons. To the tents of Greece
Himself a Greek, a faithless spy he came.
Soon to the friends of Xerxes he repair'd,
The Theban chiefs, and nightly councils held
How to betray the Spartans, or deject
By consternation. Up the arduous slope
With him each leader to the summit climbs.
Thence a tremendous prospect they command,



Where endless plains, by white pavilions hid,
Spread like the vast Atlantic, when on shore,
No rock, no promontary stops the sight
Unbounded as it wanders; while the moon,
Resplendent eye of night, in fullest orb
Surveys th' interminate expanse, and throws
Her rays abroad to deck in snowy light
The dancing billows. Such was Xerxes' camp;
A pow'r unrivall'd by the mightiest king
Or fiercest conqu'ror, whose blood-thirsty pride,
Dissolving all the sacred ties, which bind
The happiness of nations, hath upeall'd
The sleeping fury, Discord, from her den.
Not from the hundred brazen gates of Thebes,
The tow'rs of Memphis, and those pregnant fields,
Enrich'd by kindly Nile, such armies swarm'd
Around Sesostris; who with trophies fill'd
The vanquish'd east, who o'er the rapid foam
Of distant Tanais, o'er the surface broad
Of Ganges sent his formidable name.
Nor yet in Asia's far extended bounds
E'er met such numbers, not when Ninus led
Th' Assyrian race to conquest. Not the gates
Of Babylon along Euphrates pour'd
Such myriads arm'd; when emptying all her streets,
The rage of dire Semiramis they bore
Beyond the Indus; there defeated, left
His blood-stain'd current turbid with their dead.

Yet of the chiefs, contemplating this scene,
Not one is shaken Undismay'd they stand;
Th' immeasurable camp with fearless eyes
They traverse: while in meditation near
The treach'rous Malim waits, collecting all
His pomp of words to paint the hostile pow'r;
Nor yet with falsehoood arms his fraudful tongue
To feign a tale of terror. Truth herself
Beyond the reach of fiction to enhance
Now aids his treason, and with cold dismay

Might pierce the boldest heart, unless secur'd
By dauntless virtue, which disdains to live
From liberty divorc'd. Requested soon,
He breaks his artful silence. 'Greeks and friends,
Can I behold my native Malian fields,
Presenting hostile millions to your sight,
And not in grief suppress the horrid tale,
Which you exact from these ill-omen'd lips.
On Thracia's sea-beat verge I watch'd the foes;
Where, joining Europe to the Asian strand,
A mighty bridge restrain'd th' outrageous waves,
And stemm'd th' impetuous current: while in arms
The universal progeny of men
Seem'd trampling o'er the subjugated flood
By thousands, by ten thousands. Persians, Medes,
Assyrians, Saces, Indians, swarthy files
From Æthiopia, Ægypt's tawny sons,
Arabians, Bactrians, Parthians, all the strength
Of Asia, and of Libya. Neptune groan'd
Beneath their number, and indignant heav'd
His neck against th' incumbent weight. In vain
The violence of Eurus and the North,
With rage combin'd, against th' unyielding pile
Dash'd half the Hellespont. The eastern world
Sev'n days and nights uninterrupted pass
To cover Thracia's regions. They accept
A Persian lord. They range their hardy race
Beneath his standards. Macedonia's youth,
The brave Thessalian horse with ev'ry Greek,
Who dwells beyond Thermopylæ, attend,
Assist a foreign tyrant. Sire of Gods,
Who in a moment by thy will supreme
Canst quell the mighty in their proudest hopes,
Canst raise the weak to safety, Oh! impart
Thy instant succour! Interpose thy arm!
With lightning blast their standards! Oh! confound
With tripple-bolted thunder Asia's tent,
Whence rushing millions by the morn will pour
An inundation to o'erwhelm the Greeks.



else were vain against a host,
spreads Thessalia. Far beyond
in champaign, stretching wide below,
: utmost measure of the sight
aspiring cliff, the hostile camp
:t mightier numbers; who have drain'd
f copious rivers with their thirst,
heir arrows hide the mid-day sun.'

e shall give them battle in the shade,
eply'd. Not calmly thus
On Persia's camp he bent
ig brow, which frowns had furrow'd o'er,
e exclaim'd. Bellona, turn and view
l eyes that field, the fatal stage,
adness for thy rage prepar'd
e its horrors. Whet thy teeth,
death. All Asia is thy prey.
famine, and the Grecian sword
atiate hunger will provide
carnage.' He concludes;
he host immense his cloudy brow
lainful, and their strength defies.

ne an eastern herald down the pass
low-moving tow'rds the Phocian wall.
's monarch delegated, came
nd Phraortes. From the hill
onducts th' impatient chiefs.
nviron'd in his tent he sits;
s Tigranes their attention calls.

dors from Persia's king we stand
, Grecians. To display the pow'r
at master were a needless task.
of Xerxes, Asia's mighty lord,
exalted on a throne,
human lustre, must have reach'd
lime and ev'ry heart impress'd
and low submission. Yet I swear



By yon refulgent orb which flames above,
The glorious symbal of eternal pow'r,
This military throng, this shew of war
Well nigh persuade me, you have never heard
That name, at whose commanding sound the banks
Of Indus tremble, and the Caspian wave,
Th' Ægyptian flood, the Hellespontic surge
Obedient roll. O impotent and rash!
Whom yet the large beneficence of heav'n,
And heav'nly Xerxes, merciful and kind,
Deign to preserve. Resign your arms. Disperse
All to your cities. There let humblest hands
With earth and water greet your destin'd lord.'

As through th' extensive grove, whose leafy boughs,
Entwining, crown some eminence with shade,
The tempests rush sonorous, and between
The crashing branches roar; by fierce disdain,
By indignation thus the Grecians rous'd,
In loudest clamour close the Persian's speech:
But ev'ry tongue was hush'd, when Sparta's king
This brief reply deliver'd from his seat.

'O Persian, when to Xerxes thou return'st,
Say, thou hast told the wonders of his pow'r.
Then say, thou saw'st a slender band of Greece,
Which dares his boasted millions to the field.'

He adds no more. Th' ambassadors retire.
Them o'er the limits of the Grecian lines
Diomedon and Thespia's youth conduct.
In slow solemnity they all proceed,
And sullen silence; but their looks denote
Far more, than speech could utter. Wrath contracts
The forehead of Diomedon. His teeth
Gnash with impatience of delay'd revenge.
Disdain, which sprung from conscious merit, flush'd
The cheek of Dithyrambus. On the face
Of either Persian arrogance inscrib'd



By disappointment, lour'd. The utmost strait
They now attain'd, which open'd on the tents
Of Asia, there discov'ring wide to view
Her deep, immense arrangement. Then the heart
Of vain Tigranes, swelling at the sight,
Thus overflows in loud and haughty phrase.

'O Arimanius, origin of ill,
Have we demanded of thy ruthless pow'r
Thus with the curse of madness to afflict
These wretched men? But since thy dreadful ire
To irresistible perdition dooms
The Grecian race, we vainly should oppose.
Be thy dire will accomplish'd. Let them fall,
Their native soil be fatten'd with their blood.'

Enrag'd, the stern Diomedon replies.
'Thou base dependant on a lawless king,
Thou purple slave, thou boaster, dost thou know,
That I beheld the Marathonian field?
Where like the Libyan sands before the wind
Your host was scatter'd by Athenian spears;
Where thou perhaps by ignominious flight
Didst from this arm protect thy shiv'ring limbs.
O let me find thee in to-morrow's fight!
Along this rocky pavement shalt thou lie
To dogs a banquet.' With uplifted palms
Tygranes then. 'Omnipotent support
Of sceptered Xerxes, Horomazes, hear!
To thee his first victorious fruits of war
Thy worshipper devotes, the gory spoils,
Which from this Grecian by the rising dawn
In sight of either host my strength shall rend'

At length Phraortes, interposing, spake.
'I too would find among the Grecian chiefs
One, who in battle dares abides my lance.'

'The gallant youth of Thespia swift reply'd.
'Thou look'st on me, O Persian. Worthiest fax



Thou might'st have singled from the ranks of Greece,
Not one more willing to essay thy force.
Yes, I will prove before the eye of Mars,
How far the prowess of her meanest chief
Beyond thy vaunts deserves the palm of fame.'

This said, the Persians to their king repair,
Back to their camp the Grecians. There they find
Each soldier, poising his extended spear,
His weighty buckler bracing on his arm
In warlike preparation. Through the files
Each leader, moving vigilant, by praise,
By exhortation aids their native warmth.
Alone the Theban Anaxander pin'd,
Who thus apart his Malian friend bespake.

'What has thy lofty eloquence avail'd,
Alas! in vain attempting to confound
The Spartan valour? With redoubled fires,
See, how their bosoms glow. They wish to die
They wait impatient for th' unequal fight.
Too soon th' insuperable foes will spread
Promiscuous havoc round, and Thebans share
The doom of Spartans. Through the guarded pass
Who will adventure Asia's camp to reach
In our behalf? That Xerxes may be warn'd
To spare his friends amid the gen'ral wreck;
When his high-swoln resentment like a flood,
Increas'd by stormy show'rs, shall cover Greece
With desolation.' Epialtes here.

'Whence, Anaxander, this unjust despair?
Is there a path on Œta's hills unknown
To Epialtes? Over trackless rocks,
Through mazy woods my secret steps can pass.
Farewel. I go. Thy merit shall be told
To Persia's king. Thou only watch the hour,
When wanted most, thy ready succour lend.'

Mean time a wary, comprehensive care
To ev'ry part Leonidas extends;



As in the human frame through ev'ry vein
And artery minute, the ruling heart
Its vital pow'rs disperses. In his tent
The prudent chief of Locris; he consults,
He summons Melibœus by the voice
Of Agis. In humility not mean,
By no unseemly ignorance depress'd,
Th' ingenuous swain, by all th' illustrious house
Of Ajax honor'd, bows before he king,
Who gracious spake—'The confidence bestow'd,
The praise by sage Oileus might suffice
To verify thy worth. Myself have watch'd,
Have found thee skilful, active and discreet.
Thou know'st the region round. With Agis go,
The upper streights, the Phocian camp explore.'

'O condescension, Melibœus then,
More ornamental to the great, than gems,
A purple robe, or diadem! The king
Accepts my service. Pleasing is my task.
Spare not thy servant. Exercise my zeal.
Oileus will rejoice, and, smiling, say,
An humble hand may smooth a hero's path.'

He leads the way, while Agis, following, spake.
'O swain, distinguish'd by a lib'ral mind,
Who were thy parents? Where thy place of birth?'
What chance depriv'd thee of a father's house?
Oileus sure thy liberty would grant,
Or Sparta's king solicit for that grace;
When in a station equal to thy worth
Thou mayst be rank'd.'—The prudent hind began.

'In diff'rent stations diff'rent virtues dwell,
All reaping diff'rent benefits. The great
In dignity and honors meet reward
For acts of bounty, and heroic toils:
A servant's merit is obedience, truth,
Fidelity; his recompense content.

Or who my parents, is to me unknown.
In childhood seiz'd by robbers, I was sold.
They took their price. They hush'd th' atrocious
Dear to Oileus and his race I prove;
And whether noble, or ignoble born,
I am contented, studious of their love
Alone. Ye sons of Sparta, I admire
Your acts, your spirit, but confine my own
To their condition, happy in my lord,
Himself of men most happy.' Agis bland
Rejoins. 'O born with talents to become
A lot more noble, which, by thee refus'd,
Thou dost the more deserve! Laconia's king
Discerns thy merit through its modest veil.
Consummate prudence in thy words I hear.
Long may contentment, justly priz'd, be thine.
But should the state demand thee, I foresee,
Thou wouldst like others in the field excel,
Wouldst share in glory.' Blithe return'd the swai

'Not ev'ry service is confin'd to arms.
Thou shalt behold me in my present state
Not useless. If the charge, Oileus gave,
I can accomplish, meriting his praise.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Tigranes and Phraortes repair to Xerxes, whom they find seated on a throne, surrounded by his Satraps, in a magnificent pavilion; while the Magi stand before him, and sing a hymn, containing the religion of Zoroastres. Xerxes, notwithstanding the arguments of his brothers, Hyperanthes and Abrocomes, gives no credit to the ambassadors, who report, that the Grecians are determined to maintain the pass against him; but by the advice of Artemisia, the queen of Caria, ascends his chariot to take a view of the Grecians himself, and commands Demaratus, an exiled king of Sparta, to attend him. He passes through the midst of his army, consisting of many nations, differing in arms, customs and manners. He advances to the entrance of the straits, and, surprised at the behaviour of the Spartans, demands the reason of it from Demaratus; which occasions a conversation between them on the mercenary forces of Persia, and the militia of Greece. Demaratus, weeping at the sight of his countrymen, is comforted by Hyperanthes. Xerxes, still incredulous, commands Tigranes and Phraortes to bring the Grecians bound before him next day; and retires to his pavilion. Artemisia remains behind with her son, and communicates to Hyperanthes her apprehensions of a defeat at Thermopylæ. She takes an accurate view of the pass, chuses a convenient place for an ambuscade, and on her departure to the Persian camp is surprised by a reproof from a woman of an awful appearance on a cliff of mount Oeta.

LEONIDAS.

BOOK IV.

THE plain beyond Thermopylæ is girt
Half round by mountains, half by Neptune lav'd.
The arduous ridge is broken deep in clefts,
Which open channels to pellucid streams
In rapid flow sonorous. Chief in fame
Spercheos, boasting once his poplars tall,
Roams down a stony bed. Throughout the face
Of this broad champaign numberless are pitch'd
Barbarian tents. Along the winding flood
To rich Thessalia's confines they extend.
They fill the vallies, late profusely bless'd
With nature's vary'd beauties. Hostile spears
Now bristle horrid through her languid shrubs.
Pale die her flowrets under barb'rous feet.
The embracing ivy from its rock is torn.
The lawn, dismantled of its verdure, fades.
The poplar groves, uprooted from the banks,
Have desolate the stream. Elab'rate domes,
Heaven-devoted in recesses green,
With rude force, insensible and blind
To elegance and art. The statues, busts,
Figur'd vases mutilated, lie
The chisel'd columns, their engraven freeze,
Or architrave and cornice, all disjoin'd.

Unpolluted, is a part reserv'd
A deep vale, a patrimonial spot
Spartan princes, who, allies
Praxes, reign'd in Thessaly. There glow
Late the shrubs. There branch the trees
Of the forest. Over downy moss
walks and fragrant, lucid here and broad



There clos'd in myrtle under woodbine roofs,
Wind to retreats delectable, to grots,
To silvan structures, bow'rs, and cooling dells,
Enliven'd all and musical with birds
Of vocal sweetness, in reluctent plumes
Innumerably various. Lulling falls
Of liquid crystal from perennial founts
Attune their pebbled channels. Here the queen,
The noble dames of Persia, here the train
Of royal infants, each with eunuch guards,
In rich pavilions, dazzling to the sight,
Possess'd, remote from onset and surprise,
A tranquil station. Ariana here,
Ill-destin'd princess, from Darius sprung,
Hangs, undelighted, o'er melodious rills
Her drooping forehead. Love-afflicted fair!
All inharmonious are the feather'd choirs
To her sad ear. From flow'rs, and florid plants
To her the breezes, wafting fresh perfumes,
Transmit no pleasure. Sedulous in vain,
Her tender slaves in harmony with lutes
Of soothing sound their warbled voices blend
To charm her sadness. This, the precious part
Of Asia's camp, Artuchus holds in charge,
A satrap, long experienc'd, who presides
O'er all the regal palaces. High rank'd,
Bold, resolute and faithful, he commands
The whole Specchean vale. In prospect rise
The distant navy, dancing on the foam,
Th' unbounded camp, enveloping the plain,
With Xerxes' tent, august in structure plac'd
A central object to attract the eyes
Of subject millions. Thither now resort
Tigranes and Phraortes. Him they find
Inclos'd by princes, by illustrious chiefs,
The potentates of Asia. Near his side
Abrocomes and Hyperanthes wait,
His gallant brothers, with Mavæus brave,
Pandates, Intaphernes, mighty lords.



sceptre'd master from his radiant seat
down imperious. So the stately tow'r
lus, mingling its majestic brow
eav'n's bright azure, from on high survey'd
ge extent of Babylon, with all
mptuous domes and palaces beneath.
ay his banners to unfurl in Greece
onarch's will decides; but first ordains,
rateful hymns should celebrate the name
romazes; So the Persians call'd
orld's great author. Rob'd in purest white,
agi rang'd before th' unfolded tent.
az'd beside them. Tow'rds the sacred flame
urn'd, and sent their tuneful praise to heav'n.

o Zoroastres was the song deriv'd,
n the hills of Persia from his cave,
r's environ'd, and melodious founts,
sooth'd the solemn mansion, had reveal'd,
loromazes, radiant source of good,
l. immortal fram'd the globe
tfulness and beauty; how with stars
the heav'ns were spangles; how the sun,
ent Mithra, purest spring of light,
nual warmth, whence teeming nature smiles,
rom the east at his creating voice;
straight beyond the golden verge of day
hew'd the horrors of her distant reign,
black and hateful Arimanius frown'd
thor foul of evil: how with shades
is dire mansion he deform'd the works
romazes, turn'd to noxious heat
lar beam, that foodful earth might parch,
reams, exhaling, might forsake their beds,
e pestilence and famine: how the pow'r
romazes in the human breast
lence and equity infus'd,
temperance, and wisdom sprung from heav'
Arimanius blasken'd all the soul

Thou Horomazes, victory dost give.
By thee with fame the regal head is crown'd.
Great Xerxes owns thy succour. When in s
The hate of direful Arimanius swell'd
The Hellespont; thou o'er its chafing breast
The destin'd master of the world didst lead
This day his promis'd glories to enjoy:
When Greece affrighted to his arm shall bei
Ev'n as at last shall Arimanius fall
Before thy might, and evil be no more.

The Magi ceas'd their harmony. Behold,
From her tall ship between a double row
Of naval warriors, while a golden ray
Shoots from her standard, Artemisia lands.
In her enrich'd accoutrements of war,
The full-wrought buckler, and high-crested h
In Caria first devis'd, across the beach
Her tow'ring form advances. So the pine,
From Taurus hewn mature in spiry pride,
Now by the sailor in its canvass wings
Voluminous, and dazzling pendants dress'd,
On Artemisia's own imperial deck



Look'd up, and waken'd by repeated smiles
Maternal fondness, melting in that eye,
Which scowl'd on purple flatterers. Her seat
At the right hand of Xerxes she assumes,
Invited; while in adoration bow'd
Tigranes and Phraortes. Prone they lay,
Across their foreheads spread their servile palms,
As from a present deity, too bright
For mortal vision, to conceal their eyes.
At length in abject phrase Tigranes thus—

'O Xerxes, live for ever! Gracious lord,
Who dost permit thy servants to approach
Thy awful sight, and prostrate to confess
Thy majesty and radiance. May the pow'r
Of Horomazes stretch thy regal arm
O'er endless nations from the Indian shores
To those wide floods, which beat Iberian strands,
From northern Tanais to the source of Nile!
Still from thy head may Arimanius bend
Against thy foes his malice! Yonder Greeks,
Already smit with frenzy by his wrath,
Reject thy profer'd clemency. They choose
To magnify thy glory by their fall.'

'The monarch, turning to his brother, spake.
Say, Hyperanthes, can thy soul believe
These tidings? Sure these slaves have never dar'd
To face the Grecians, but to delude our ears
With base impostures, which their fear suggests.'

He frown'd, and Hyperanthes calm reply'd.
'O from his servants may the king avert
His indignation! Greece was fam'd of old
For martial spirit, and a dauntless breed.
I once have try'd their valor. To my words
Abrocomes can witness. When thy sire
And ours, Darius, to Athenian shores
With Artaphernes brave and Datis sent

Our tender youth; at Marathôn we found,
How weak the hope, that numbers could dismay
A foe, resolv'd on victory, or death.
Yet not, as one contemptible, or base,
Let me appear before thee. Though the Greeks
With such persisting courage be endu'd,
Soon as the king shall summon to the field,
He shall behold me in the dang'rous van
Exalt my spear, and pierce the hostile ranks,
Or sink beneath them.' Xerxes swift rejoin'd—

'Why over Asia, and the Lybian soil
With all their nations doth my potent arm
Extend its sceptre? Wherefore do I sweep
Across the earth with millions in my train?
Why shade the ocean with unnumber'd sails?
Why all this pow'r, unless th' Almighty's will
Decreed one master to the subject world;
And that the earth's extremity alone
Should bound my empire? He for this reduc'd
The Nile's revolted sons enlarg'd my sway
With sandy Libya, and the sultry clime
Of Æthiopia. He for this subdu'd
The Hellespontic foam, and taught the sea
Obedience to my nod. Then dream no more,
That heav'n, deserting my imperial cause,
With courage more than human, will inspire
Yon despicable Grecians, and expunge
The common fears of nature from their breasts.'

The monarch ceas'd. 'Abrocomes began.
The king commands us to reveal our thoughts.
Incredulous he hears. But time and truth
Not Horomazes can arrest. Thy beams
To instant light'ning, Mithra, mayst thou change
For my destruction; may th' offended king
Frown on his servant, cast a loathing eye;
If the assertion of my lips be false:
Our farther march those Greeians will oppose.'

Amid th' encircling peers Argestes sat,
A potent prince. O'er Sipylus he reign'd,
Whose verdant summits overlook'd the waves
Of Hermus and Pactolus. Either stream,
Enrich'd by golden sands, a tribute pay'd
To this great Satrap. Through the servile court
Yet none was found more practic'd in the arts
Of mean submission; none more skill'd to gain
The royal favor; none, who better knew
The phrase, the look, the gesture of a slave;
None more detesting Artemisia's worth,
By her none more despis'd. His master's eye
He caught, then spake. 'Display thy dazzling state,
Thou deity of Asia. Greece will hide
Before thy presence her dejected face.'

Last Artemisia, rising stern, began.
'Why sits the lord of Asia in his tent,
Unprofitably wasting precious hours
In vain discussion, whether yonder Greeks,
Rang'd in defence of that important pass,
Will fight, or fly? A question by the sword
To be decided. Still to narrow straits
By land, by sea thy council hath confin'd
Each enterprise of war. In numbers weak
Twice have th' Athenians in Eubœa's frith
Repuls'd the navy—But whate'er thy will,
Be it enforc'd by vigor. Let the king
The diff'rence see by trial in the field
Between smooth sound and valor. Then dissolve
These impotent debates. Ascend thy car.
The future stage of war thyself explore.
Behind thee leave the vanity of hope,
That such a foe to splendor will submit,
Whom steel, not gold must vanquish. Thou provide
Thy mail, Argestes. Not in silken robes,
Not as in council with an oily tongue,
But spear to spear, and clanging shield to shield,
Thou *soon* must *grapple on* a field of blood.'

The king arose—' No more. Prepare my car.
The Spartan exile, Demaratus, call.
We will ourselves advance to view the foe.'

The monarch will'd; and suddenly he heard
His trampling horses. High on silver wheels
The iv'ry car with azure sapphires shone,
Cærulean beryls, and the jasper green,
The emerald, the ruby's glowing blush,
The flaming topaz with its golden beam,
The pearl, th' empurpled amethyst, and all
The various gems, which India's mines afford
To deck the pomp of kings. In burnish'd gold
A sculptur'd eagle from behind display'd
His stately neck, and o'er the royal head
Outstretch'd his dazzling wings. Eight gen'rous st
Which on the fam'd Nisæan plain were nurs'd
In wintry Media, drew the radiant car.
Not those of old, to Hercules refus'd
By false Laomedon, northey, which bore
The son of Thetis through the scatter'd rear
Of Troy's devoted race, with these might vie
In strength, or beauty. In obedient pride
They hear their lord. Exulting, in the air
They toss their foreheads. On their glist'ning ches
The silver manes disport. The king ascends.
Beside his footstool Demaratus sits.
The charioteer now shakes th' effulgent reins,
Strong Patiramphes. At the signal bound
Th' attentive steeds; the chariot flies; behind,
Ten thousand horse in thunder sweep the field.
Down to the sea-beat margin, on a plain
Of vast expansion in battalia wait
The eastern bands. To these th' imperial wheels,
By princes follow'd in a hundred cars,
Proceed. The queen of Caria and her son
With Hyperanthes rode. The king's approach
Swift through the wide arrangement is proclaim'd.
He now draws nigh. Th' innumerable host



by nations, and admit their lord
is satraps. As from crystal domes,
erneath an arch of pendent seas,
t stern pow'r, whose trident rules the floods,
a cærulean deity ascends,
n his pearly chariot, all the deep
s bosom to th' emerging god;
rode between the Asian world,
side receding: when, as down
easurable ranks his sight was lost,
tary gloom o'ercast his mind,
s reflection fill'd his eyes with tears;
n as time an hundred years has told,
mong those millions should survive.
o obscure thy pride arose that cloud?
ast once humanity could touch
breast? Or rather did thy soul
) Xerxes, at the bitter thought,
hy pow'r was mortal? But the veil
s soon forsook his brightning eye,
doring awe those millions bow'd,
s heart relentless pride recall'd.
mingled prospect he surveys
ing files unnumber'd, chariots scyth'd,
'ring axles roll'd, and haughty steeds,
uous trappings clad; Barbaric pomp.
rgeous banners to the sun expand
aming volumes of relucent gold,
nt amidst tiaras gemm'd,
helmets, shields emboss'd, and spears
r equal to the bladed grass,
ring green in vernal beauty clothes
's vale. What pow'rs of sounding verse
e mind present th' amazing scene?
whom rumour's fabling voice delights,
ney, to my aid I call;
, historic truth, support my song,
all the various multitude display,
e, their manners and their native vests.

The Persians first in scaly corselets shone,
A gen'rous nation, worthy to enjoy
The liberty their injur'd fathers lost,
Whose arms for Cyrus overturn'd the strength
Of Babylon and Sardis. Pow'r advanc'd
The victor's head above his country's laws.
Their tongues were practis'd in the words of truth;
Their limbs inur'd to ev'ry manly toil,
To brace the bow, to rule th' impetuous steed,
To dart the javelin; but untaught to form
The ranks of war, with unconnected force,
With ineffectual fortitude they rush'd,
As on a fence of adamant, to pierce
Th' indissoluble phalanx. Lances short,
And osier-woven targets, they oppos'd
To weighty Grecian spears, and massy shields.
On ev'ry head tiaras rose like tow'rs,
Impenetrable. With a golden gloss
Blaz'd their gay sandals, and the floating reins
Of each proud courser. Daggers on their thighs,
Well-furnish'd quivers on their shoulders hung,
And strongest bows of mighty size they bore.
Resembling these in arms, the Medes are seen,
The Cyssians and Hyrcanians. Media once
From her bleak mountains aw'd the subject east.
Her kings in cold Ecbatana were thron'd.
The Cissians march'd from Susa's regal walls,
From sultry fields, o'erspread with branching palm
And white with lillies, water'd by the floods
Of fam'd Choaspes. His transparent wave
The costly goblet wafts to Persia's kings.
All other streams the royal lip disdains.
Hyrcania's race forsook their fruitful clime,
Dark in the shadows of expanding oaks,
To Ceres dear and Bacchus. There the corn,
Bent by its foodful burden sheds, unreap'd,
Its plenteous seed, impregnating the soil
With future harvests; while in ev'ry wood
Their precious labours on the loaden boughs



The honey'd swarms pursue. Assyria's sons
Display their brazen casques, unskilful work
Of rude Barbarians. Each sustains a mace,
O'erlaid with iron. Near Euphrates' banks
Within the mighty Babylonian gates
They dwell, and where still mightier once in sway
Old Ninus rear'd its head, th' imperial seat
Of eldest tyrants. These Chaldea joins,
The land of shepherds. From the pastures wide
There Belus first discern'd the various course
Of heav'n's bright planets, and the clust'ring stars
With names distinguish'd; whence himself was deem'd
The first of Gods. His sky-ascending fane
In Babylon the proud Assyrians rais'd.
Drawn from the bounteous soil, by Oehus lav'd,
The Bactrians stood, and rough in skins of goats
The Parisanian archers. Caspian ranks
From barren mountains, from the joyless coast
Around the stormy lake, whose name they bore,
Their scymetars upheld, and cany bows.
The Indian tribe the threefold host compose.
Part guide the courser, part the rapid car;
The rest on foot within the bending cane
For slaughter fix the iron-pointed reed.
They o'er the Indus from the distant verge
Of Ganges passing, left a region lov'd
By lavish nature. There the season bland
Bestows a double harvest. Honey'd shrubs,
The cinnamon, the spikenard bless their fields.
Array'd in native wealth, each warrior shines.
His ears bright-beaming pendants grace; his hands,
Encircled, wear a bracelet, starr'd with gems.
Such were the nations, who to Xerxes sent
Their mingled aids of infantry and horse.

Now, muse, recite, what multitudes obscur'd
The plain on foot, or elevated high
On martial axles, or on camels beat
The loosen'd mould. The Parthians first appear,

Then weak in numbers, from unfruitful hills,
From woods, nor yet for warlike steeds renown'd,
Near them the Sogdians, Dadiees arrange,
Gandarians and Chorasmians. Scian throngs
From cold Imaus pour'd, from Oxus' wave,
From Cyra, built on Iaxartes' brink,
A bound of Persia's empire. Wild, unta m'd,
To fury prone their deserts they forsook.
A bow, a falchion, and a pond'rous ax
The savage legions arm'd. A pointed casque
O'er each grim visage rear'd an iron cone.
In arms like Persians the Saranges stood.
High, as their knees, the shapely buskins clung
Around their legs. Magnificent they trod
In garments richly tinctur'd. Next are seen
The Pactian, Mycian, and the Utian train,
In skins of goats rude-vested. But in spoils
Of tawny lions, and of spotted pards
The graceful range of Æthiopians shews
An equal stature, and a beauteous frame.
Their torrid region had imbrown'd their cheeks;
And curl'd their jetty locks. In ancient song
Renown'd for justice, riches they disdain'd,
As foes to virtue. From their seat remote
On Nilus' verge above th' Ægyptian bound
Fore'd by their king's malignity and pride,
These friends of hospitality and peace,
Themselves uninjur'd wage reluctant war
Against a land, whose climate, and whose name
To them were strange. With hardest stone they poi
The rapid arrow. Bows four cubits long,
Form'd of elastic branches from the palm,
They carry knotted clubs and lances, arm'd
With horns of goats. The Paphlagonians march'd,
From where Carambis with projected brows
O'erlooks the dusky Euxien, wrapt in mists
From where through flow'ts which paint his vary'd ba
Parthenius flows. The Ligyan bands succeed;
The Mati'nians, Mariand'nians next;

... clusters on the plains
... Damascus. All, who bear the name
Of Cappadocians, swell the Syrian host,
With those, who gather from the fragrant shrub
The aromatic balsam, and extract
Its milky juice along the lovely side
Of Jordan, winding, till immers'd he sleeps
Beneath a pitchy surface, which obscures
Th' Asphaltic pool. The Phrygians then advance,
To them their ancient colony are join'd,
Armenia's sons. These see the gushing founts
Of strong Euphrates cleave the yielding earth,
Then, wide in lakes expanding, hide the plain;
Whence with collected waters, fierce and deep,
His passage rending through diminish'd rocks,
To Babylon he foams. Not so the stream
Of soft Araxes to the Caspian glides;
He, stealing imperceptibly, sustains
The green profusion of Armenia's meads.

Now strange to view, in similar attire,
Far unlike in manners to the Greeks,
Near the Lydians. Wantonness and sport
Are all their care. Beside Caeyster's hoary
... smooth Maeander, wind-

Through hail and tempest, which enrag'd the m
And shook beneath their trembling steps the pil
Conjoining Asia and the western world.
To them Mœonia hut with sulph'rous mines
Unites her troops. No tree adorns their fields,
Unbless'd by verdure. Ashes hide the soil:
Black are the rocks, and ev'ry hill deform'd
By conflagration. Helmets press their brows.
Two darts they brandish. On their woolly vests
A sword is girt; and hairy hides compose
Their bucklers round and small. The Mysians l
Olympus wood-env lop'd, left the meads,
Wash'd by Caicus, and the baneful tide
Of Lycus, nurse to serpents. Next advance
An ancient nation, who in early times
By Trojan arms assail'd, their native land
Esteem'd less dear, than freedom, and exchang'd
Their seat on Strymon, where in Thrace he pou
A freezing current, for the distant flood
Of fishy Sangar. These, Bithynians nam'd,
Their habitation to the sacred feet
Of Dindymus extend. Yet there they groan
Beneath oppression, and their freedom mourn
On Sangar now, as once on Strymon lost.
The ruddy skins of foxes cloth'd their heads.
Their shields were fashion'd like the horned moo
A vest embrac'd their bodies; while abroad,
Ting'd with unnumber'd hues, a mantle flow'd.
But other Thracians, who their former name
Retain'd in Asia, fulgent morions wore,
With horns of bulls inimitating brass,
Curv'd o'er the crested ridge. Phœnician cloth
Their legs infolded. Wont to chase the wolf,
A hunter's spear they grasp'd. What nations st
On either side of Xerxes, while he pass'd,
Their huge array discov'ring, swell his soul
With more than mortal pride! The clustered ha
Of Moschians and Macronians now appear,
The Mosynocians, who, on berries fed,

[illegible] are the Milyans. Solymi their name
In thy celestial strains, Pisidia's hills
Their dwelling. Once a formidable train
They fac'd the strong Bellerophon in war.
Now doom'd a more tremendous foe to meet,
Themselves unnerv'd by thraldom, they must leave
Their putrid bodies to the dogs of Greece.
The Marians follow. Next is Iria's host,
Drawn from a region horrid all in thorn,
A dreary waste of sands, which mock the toil
Of patient culture; save one favor'd spot,
Which from the wild emerges like an isle,
Attir'd in verdure, interspers'd with vines
Of gen'rous nurture, yielding juice, which scorns
The injuries of time: yet nature's hand
Had sown their rocks with coral; had enrich'd
Their desert hills with veins of sapphires blue,
Which on the turban shine. On ev'ry neck
The coral blushes through the num'rous throng.
The Allarodians and Sasperian bands,
Equipp'd like Colchians, wield a falchion small.
Their heads are guarded by a helm of wood,
Their lances short, of hides undress'd their shields.
The Colchians march'd from Phasis [illegible]

She gaz'd in fatal ravishment, and lov'd.
Then to the hero she resigns her heart.
Her magic tames the brazen-footed bulls.
She lulls the sleepless dragon. O'er the main
He wafts the golden prize, and gen'rous fair,
The destin'd victim of his treach'rous vows.
The hostile Colchians then pursu'd their flight
In vain. By ancient enmity inflam'd,
Or to reeal the long-forgotten wrong
Compell'd by Xerxes, now they menace Greece
With desolation. Next in Median garb
A croud appear'd, who left the peopled isles
In Persia's gulph, and round Arabia strewn.
Some in their native topaz were adorn'd,
From Ophiodes, from Topazos sprung;
Some in the shells of tortoises, which brood
Around Casitis' verge. For battle range
Those who reside where, all beset with palms,
Erythras lies entomb'd. a potent king,
Who nam'd of old the Erythrean main.
On chariots scyth'd the Libyans sat, array'd
In skins terrific, brandishing their darts
Of wood, well-temper'd in the hard'ning flames
Not Lybia's deserts from tyrannic sway
Could hide her sons; much less could freedom dw
Amid the plenty of Arabia's fields:
Where spicy cassia, where the fragrant reed,
Where myrrh, and hallow'd frankincence perfur
The zephyr's wing. A bow of largest size
Th' Arabian carries. O'er his lucid vest
Loose floats a mantle, on his shoulder claps'd:
Two chosen myriads on the lofty backs
Of camels rode, who match'd the fleetest horse.

Such were the numbers, which, from Asia led
In base prostration bow'd before the wheels
Of Xerxes' chariot. Yet what legions more
The Malian sand o'ershadow? Forward rolls
The regal car through nations, who in arms,



In order'd ranks unlike the orient tribes,
Upheld the spear and buckler. But, untaught
To bend the servile knee, erect they stood;
Unless that, mourning o'er the shameful weight
Of their new bondage, some their brows depress'd,
Their arms with grief distaining. Europe's sons
Were these, whom Xerxes by resistless force
Had gather'd round his standards. Murm'ring here,
The sons of Thrace and Macedonia rang'd;
Here on his steed the brave Thessalian frown'd;
There pin'd reluctant multitudes, of Greece
Redundant plants, in colonies disper's'd
Between Byzantium and the Malian bay.

Through all the nations, who ador'd his pride,
Or fear'd his pow'r, the monarch now was pass'd;
Nor yet among those millions could be found
One, who in beauteous feature might compare,
Or tow'ring size with Xerxes. O possess'd
Of all but virtue, doom'd to shew, how mean,
How weak without her is unbounded pow'r,
The charm of beauty and the blaze of state,
How insecure of happiness, how vain!
Thou, who couldst mourn the common lot, by heav'n
From none withheld, which oft to thousands proves
Their only refuge from a tyrant's rage;
Which in consuming sickness, age or pain,
Becomes at last a soothing hope to all:
Thou, who couldst weep, that nature's gentle hand
Should lay her weary'd offspring in the tomb;
Yet couldst remorseless from their peaceful seats
Lead half the nations, victims to thy pride,
To famine, plague and massacre a prey;
What didst thou merit from the injur'd world?
What suff'rings to compensate for the tears
Of Asia's mothers, for unpeopled realms,
For all this waste of nature? On his host
Th' exulting monarch bends his haughty sight,
To Demaratus then directs his voice.

'My father, great Darius, to thy mind
Recal, O Spartan. Gracious he receiv'd
Thy wand'ring steps, expell'd their native home.
My favor too remember. To beguile
Thy benefactor, and disfigure truth
Would ill become thee. With consid'rate eyes
Look back on these battalions. Now declare,
If yonder Grecians will oppose their march.'

To him the exile. 'Deem not, mighty lord,
I will deceive thy goodness by a tale
To give them glory, who degraded mine.
Nor be the king offended, while I use
The voice of truth. The Spartans never fly.'

Contemptuous smil'd the monarch, and resum'd.
'Wilt thou, in Lacedæmon once supreme,
Encounter twenty Persians! Yet these Greeks
In greater disproportion must engage
Our host to-morrow.' Demaratus then—

'By single combat were the trial vain
To shew the pow'r of well-united force,
Which oft by military skill surmounts
The weight of numbers. Prince, the diff'rence less
Between thy warriors, and the sons of Greece.
The flow'r, the safeguard of thy numerous camp
Are mercenaries. These are canton'd round
Thy provinces. No fertile field demands
Their painful hand to break the fallow glebe.
Them to the noon-day toil no harvest calls.
Nor on the mountain falls the stubborn oak
By their laborious axe. Their watchful eyes
Observe not, how the flocks and heifers feed.
To them, of wealth of all possessions, void,
The name of country with an empty sound
Flies o'er the ear, nor warms their joyless hearts,
Who share no country. Needy, yet in scorn
Rejecting labor, wretched by their wants,

Yet profligate through indolence, with limbs
Enervated and soft, with minds corrupt,
From misery, debauchery and sloth.
Are these to battle drawn against a foe,
Train'd in gymnastic exercise and arms,
Inur'd to hardship, and the child of toil,
Wont through the freezing show'r, the wintry storm
O'er his own glebe the tardy ox to goad,
Or in the sun's impetuous heat to glow
Beneath the burden of his yellow sheaves;
Whence on himself, on her, whose faithful arms
Infold him joyful, on a growing race,
Which glad his dwelling, plenty he bestows
With independence. When to battle call'd,
For them his dearest comfort, and his care,
And for the harvest, promis'd to his toil,
He lifts the shield, nor shuns unequal force.
Such are the troops of ev'ry state in Greece.
One only yields a breed more warlike still,
Of whom selected bands appear in sight,
All citizens of Sparta. They the glebe
Have never turn'd, nor bound the golden sheaf.
They are devoted to severer tasks,
For war alone, their sole delight and care.
From infancy to manhood they are train'd
To winter watches, to inclement skies,
To plunge through torrents, brave the tusky boar,
To arms and wounds; a discipline of pain
So fierce, so constant, that to them a camp
With all its hardships is a seat of rest,
And war itself remission from their toil.'

'Thy words are folly, with redoubled scorn
Returns the monarch. Doth not freedom dwell
Among the Spartans? Therefore will they shun
Superior foes. The unrestrain'd and free
Will fly from danger; while my vassals, born
To absolute controulment from their king,
Know, *if th' allotted station* they desert,
The scourge awaits them, and my heavy wrath.'

To this the exile. 'O conceive not, prince,
That Spartans want an object, where to fix
Their eyes in rev'rence, in obedient dread.
To them more awful than the name of king
To Asia's trembling millions, is the law;
Whose sacred voice enjoins them to confront
Unnumber'd foes, to vanquish, or to die.'

Here Demaratus pauses. Xerxes halts.
Its long defile Thermopylæ presents.
The satraps leave their cars. On foot they form
A splendid orb around their lord. By chance
The Spartans, then compos'd th' external guard
They, in a martial exercise employ'd,
Heed not the monarch, or his gaudy train;
But poise the spear, protended, as in fight;
Or lift their adverse shields in single strife;
Or, trooping, forward rush, retreat and wheel
In ranks unbroken, and with equal feet.
While others, calm, beneath their polish'd helms
Draw down their hair, whose length of sable curls
O'erspread their necks with terror. Xerxes hears
The exile questions—'What do these intend,
Who with assiduous hands adjust their hair?'

To whom the Spartan—'O imperial lord,
Such is their cus'om, to adorn their heads,
When full determin'd to encounter death.
Bring down thy nations in resplendent steel;
Arm, if thou canst, the gen'ral race of man,
All who possess the regions unexplor'd
Beyond the Ganges, all, whose wand'ring steps
Above the Caspian range the Scythian wild,
With those who drink the secret fount of Nile;
Yet to Laconian bosoms shall dismay
Remain a stranger.' Fervour from his lips
Thus breaks aloud; when, gushing from his eyes
Resistless grief o'erflows his cheeks. Aside



His head he turns. He weeps in copious streams.
The keen remembrance of his former state,
His dignity, his greatness, and the sight
Of those brave ranks, which thus unshaken stood,
And spread amazement through the world in arms,
Excite these sorrows. His impassion'd looks
Review the godlike warriors, who beneath
His standard once victorious fought; who call'd
Him once their king, their leader: then again,
O'ercharg'd with anguish, he bedews with tears
His rev'rend beard; in agony bemoans
His faded honors, his illustrious name
Forgotten long, his majesty defil'd
By exile, by dependence. So obscur'd
By sordid moss, and ivy's creeping leaf,
Some princely palace, or stupendous fane
Magnificent in ruin, nods; where time
From under shelving architraves hath mow'd
The column down, and cleft the pond'rous dome.

Not unobserv'd by Hyperanthes, mourn'd
Th' unhappy Spartan. Kindly in his own
He press'd the exile's hand, and thus humane—

'O Demaratus, in this grief I see,
How just thy praises of Laconia's state.
Though cherish'd here with universal love,
Thou still deplor'st thy absence from her face,
How'e'er averse to thine. But swift relief
From indignation borrow. Call to mind
Thy injuries. Th' auspicious fortune bless,
Which led thee far from calumny and fraud,
To peace, to honor, in the Persian court.'

As Demaratus, with a grateful mind,
His answer was preparing, Persia's king
Stern interrupted—'Soon as morning shines,
Do you, Tigranes and Phraortes, lead
The Medes and Cissians. Bring these Greeians bound.'

This said, the monarch to his camp returns.
Th' attendant princes reascend their cars,
Save Hyperanthes, by the Carian queen
Detain'd, who thus began—'Impartial, brave,
Nurs'd in a court, yet virtuous, let my heart
To thee its feelings undisguis'd reveal.
Thou hear'st thy royal brother. He demands
These Grecians bound. Why stops his mandate there?
Why not command the mountains to remove,
Or sink to level plains. Yon Spartans view,
Their weighty arms, their countenances. To die
My gratitude instructs me in the cause
Of our imperial master. To succeed
Is not within the shadow of my hopes
At this dire pass. What evil genius sways
Tigranes, false Argestes, and the rest
In name a council, ceaseless have oppos'd
My dictates, oft repeated in despight
Of purpled flatt'rers, to embark a force,
Which, pouring on Laconia, might confine
These sons of valour to their own defence.
Vain are my words. The royal ear admits
Their sound alone; while adulation's notes
In Siren sweetness penetrate his heart,
There lodge ensnaring mischief.' In a sigh
To her the prince—'O faithful to thy lord,
Discreet adviser, and in action firm,
What can I answer? My afflicted soul
Must seek its refuge in a feeble hope.
Thou mayst be partial to thy Dorie race,
Mayst magnify our danger. Let me hope,
What'er the danger, if extreme, believe,
That Hyperanthes for his prince can bleed
Not with less zeal than Spartans for their laws.'

They separate. To Xerxes he repairs.
The queen, surrounded by the Carian guard,
Stays and retraces with sagacious ken
The destin'd field of war, the vary'd ground,



Its depth, its confines both of hill and sea,
Mean time a scene more splendid hath allur'd
Her son's attention. His transported sight
With ecstasy like worship long pursues
The pomp of Xerxes in retreat, the throne,
Which shew'd their idol to the nations round,
The bounding steeds, caparison'd in gold,
The plumes, the chariots, standards. He excites
Her care, express'd in these pathetic strains.—

'Look on the king with gratitude. His sire
Protected thine. Himself upholds our state.
By loyalty inflexible repay
The obligation. To immortal pow'rs
The adoration of thy soul confine;
And look undazzled on the pomp of man
Most weak when highest. Then the jealous gods
Watch to supplant him. They his paths, his courts,
His chambers fill with flatt'ry's pois'nous swarms,
Whose honey'd bane, by kingly pride devour'd,
Consumes the health of kingdoms. Here the boy
By an attention, which surpass'd his years,
Unlocks her inmost bosom. Thrice accurs'd
Be those, th' indignant heroine pursues,
'Those, who have tempted their imperial lord
To that prepost'rous arrogance, which cast
Chains in the deep to manacle the waves,
Chastis'd with stripes in heav'n's offended sight
The Hellespont, and fondly now demands
The Spartans bound. O child, my soul's delight,
Train'd by my care to equitable sway,
And imitation of the gods by deeds
To merit their protection, heed my voice.
They, who alone can tame, or swell the floods,
Compose the winds, or guide their strong career,
O'erwhelming human greatness, will confound
Such vanity in mortals. On our fleet
Their indignation has already fall'n.
Perhaps our boasted army is prepar'd
A prey, for death to vindicate their pow'r.'

This said, a curious search in ev'ry part
Her eye renews. Adjoining to the straits,
Fresh bloom'd a thicket of entwining shrubs,
And seeming fence to some sequester'd ground,
By travellers unbeaten. Swift her guards
Address'd their spears to part the pliant boughs.
Held back, they yield a passage to the queen
And princely boy. Delicious to their sight,
Soft dales, meand'ring, shew their flow'ry laps
Among rude piles of nature. In their sides
Of rock are mansions hewn; nor loaden trees
Of cluster'd fruit are wanting, but no sound,
Except of brooks in murmur, and the song
Of winged warblers, meets the list'ning ear.
No grazing herd, no flock, nor human form,
Is seen; no careful husband, at his toil,
Beside her threshold no industrious wife,
No playful child. Instructive to her son
The princess then—Already these abodes
Are desolate. Once happy in their homes,
Th' inhabitants forsake them. Pleasing scene
Of nature's bounty, soon will savage Mars
Deform the lovely ringlets of thy shrubs,
And coarsely pluck thy violated fruits,
Unripe: will deafen with his clangour fell,
Thy tuneful choirs. I mourn thy destin'd spoil,
Yet come thy first despoiler. Captains, plant,
Ere morning breaks, my secret standard here.
Come, boy, away. Thy safety will I trust
To Demaratus; while thy mother tries,
With these her martial followers, what sparks,
Left by our Dorie fathers, yet inflame
Their sons and daughters in a stern debate
With other Dorians, who have never breath'd
The soft'ning gales of Asia, never bow'd
In forc'd allegiance to Barbarian thrones.
Thou heed my order. Thou ingenuous looks
Of discontent suppress. For thee this fight
Were too severe a lesson. Thou might'st bleed

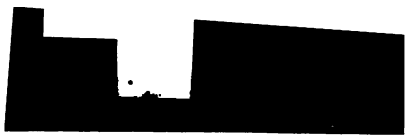


the thousands fated to expire
rta's lance. Let Artemisia die,
isposing rulers, but protect
.' She ceas'd. The lioness, who reigns
of the forest, terrible in strength,
me to fury, thus, by nature taught,
'er her young in blandishment and love.

slowly tow'rds the Persian camp her steps
se she directed; when a voice,
m a rock, accessible which seem'd
: but feather'd passengers of air,
reproof detain'd her—'Caria's queen
, to Greece by Doric blood ally'd?
how to lay her fruitful meadows waste
nager of tyrants!' Upward gaz'd
nish'd princess. Lo! a female shape,
majestic, from th' impendent ridge
wful down. A holy fillet bound
eful hair, loose flowing. Seldom wept
rtemisia. Now a springing tear
her eyelids gleam'd. Too true, she sigh'd
er of tyrants! Voice austere,
ence half-divine! Again the voice.

emisia, hide thy Doric sword:
arbarian tyrant through thy might,
nsels, valiant as thou art and wise,
: the holy fanes, deface the tombs,
the laws of Greece, her sons enthrall.'

ueen made no reply. Her breast-plate heav'd.
ulous attire of cov'ring mail
l her struggle. She at length exclaim'd—
n thund'rer, from thy neighb'ring hill,
l oaths remind me!' Then aside
, to shun that majesty of form,
a sounds upbraiding. Torn her thoughts



She feels. A painful conflict she endures,
With recollection of her Dorie race;
Till gratitude, reviving, arms her breast.
Her royal benefactor she recalls,
Back to his sight precipitates her steps.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK V.



THE ARGUMENT.

Leonidas, rising by break of day, hears the intelligence, which Agis and Melibœus bring from the upper pass; then commands a body of Arcadians, with the Plateans and Thespians, to be drawn out for battle under the conduct of Demophilus in that part of Thermopylæ which lies close to the Phocian wall, from whence he harangues them. The enemy approaches. Diomedon kills Tigranes in single combat. Both armies join battle. Dithyrambus kills Pharnortes. The Persians, entirely defeated, are pursued by Demophilus to the extremity of the pass. The Arcadians, inconsiderately advancing beyond it, fall into an ambush, which Artemisia had laid to cover the retreat of the Persians. She kills Clonius, but is herself repuls'd by Demophilus. Diomedon and Dithyrambus give chace to her broken forces over the plains in the sight of Persia's camp, whence she receives no assistance. She rallies a small body, and, facing the enemy, disables Dithyrambus by a blow on his helmet. This puts the Grecians into some confusion, and gives her an opportunity of preserving the remainder of her Carians by a timely retreat. She gains the camp, accuses Argestes of treachery; but, pacified by Demaratus, is accompanied by him with a thousand horse to collect the dead bodies of her soldiers for sepulchre.



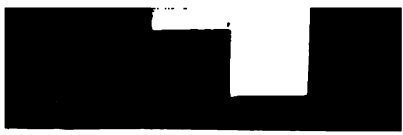
LEONIDAS.

BOOK V.

AURORA dawn'd. Leonidas arose.
With Melibœus, Agis, now return'd,
Address'd the king—'Along the mountain's side
We bent our journey. On our way a voice,
Loud from a crag, on Melibœus call'd.
He look'd and answer'd. Myeon, ancient friend!
Thou hast thou driv'n thy bearded train to day;
But fortunate thy presence. None like thee,
Inhabitant of Œta from thy birth,
Can furnish that intelligence, which Greece
Wants for her safety. Myeon shew'd a track.
We mounted high. The summit, where we stopp'd,
Gave to the sight a prospect wide o'er hills
Per dales and forests, rocks, and dashing floods
In cataracts. The object of our search
Beneath us lay, the secret pass to Greece,
Where not five warriors in a rank can tread.
We thence descended to the Phocian camp,
Beset with scatter'd oaks, which rose and spread
In height and shade; on whose sustaining boughs
Were hung in snowy folds a thousand tents,
Containing each a Phocian heavy-mail'd
With two light-weapon'd menials. Northward ends
The vale, contracted to that narrow strait,
Which first we saw with Myeon.' Prudent care
Like yours alleviates mine, well pleas'd the king
Reply'd. 'Now, Agis, from Arcadia's bands
Select a thousand spears. To them unite
The Thespians and Platæans. Draw their lines
Beneath the wall, which fortifies the pass.
There, close embody'd, will their might repulse
The num'rous foe. Demophiles salute.

Approv'd in martial service, him I name
The chief supreme.' Obedient to his will
Th' appointed warriors, issuing from the tents,
Fill their deep files, and watch the high command.
So round their monarch in his stormy hall
The winds assemble. From his dusky throne
His dreadful mandates Æolus proclaims
To swell the main, or heav'n with clouds deform,
Or bend the forest from the mountain's brow.
Laconia's leader from the rampart's height
To battle thus the list'ning host inflames.

'This day. O Grecians, countrymen and friends,
Your wives, your offspring, your paternal seats,
Your parents, country, liberty and laws
Demand your swords. You gen'rous, active, brave,
Vers'd in the various discipline of Mars,
Are now to grapple with ignoble foes,
In war unskilful, nature's basest dross,
And thence a monarch's mercenary slaves.
Relax'd their limbs, their spirits are deprav'd
By eastern sloth and pleasures. Hire their cause,
Their only fruit of victory is spoil.
They know not freedom, nor its lib'ral cares.
Such is the flow'r of Asia's host. The rest,
Who fill her boasted numbers, are a croud,
Forc'd from their homes; a popu.ace, in peace
By jealous tyranny disarm'd, in war
Their tyrant's victims. Taught in passive grief
To bear the rapine, cruelty and spurns
Of Xerxes' mercenary band they pine
In servitude to slaves. With terror sounds
The trumpet's clangour in their trembling ears.
Unwonted loads, the buckler and the lance
Their hands sustain, encumber'd, and present
The mockery of war—But ev'ry eye
Shoots forth impatient flames. Your gallant breasts
Too long their swelling spirit have confin'd.
Go then, ye sons of liberty; go, sweep



e bondmen from the field. Resistless rend
plitt'ring standard from their servile grasp.
to the ground their ignominious heads,
warrior's helm profaning. Think the shades
ur forefathers lift their sacred brows
to enjoy the glory of their sons.'

spake. Loud pæans issue from the Greeks.
ree reply Barbarian shouts ascend
hostile nations, thronging down the pass.
is the roar of Ætna, when his mouth
odes combustion from his sulph'rous depths
ast the smiles of nature. Dauntless stood
ep array before the Phœian wall
halanx, wedg'd with implicated shields,
pears protended, like the graceful range
dusous elms, whose interwoven boughs
e some rural palace wide expand
venerable umbrage to retard
orth's impetuous wing. As o'er the main
id rows the rising waves reflect
un's effulgence; so the Grecian helms
n'd his light, which o'er their convex pour'd
endour, scatter'd through the dancing plumes.

wn rush the foes. Exulting in their van,
haughty leader shake his threat'ning lance,
king battle. Instant from his rank
edon bursts furious. On he strides,
onts Tigranes, whom he thus defies.

ow are we met, Barbarian. Wouldst thou prove
actions equal to thy vaunts, command
troops to halt, while thou and I engage.'

ranes, turning to the Persians, spake
riends and soldiers, check your martial haste,
e my strong lance that Grecian's pride confounds.'

He ceas'd. In dreadful opposition seen
Each combatant advanc'd. Their sinewy hands
Grip'd fast their spears, high brandish'd. Thrice t
drove
With well directed force the pointed steel
At either's throat, and thrice their wary shields
Repell'd the menac'd wound. The Asian chief
At length, with pow'rs collected for the stroke,
His weapon rivets in the Grecian targe.
Aside Diomedon inclines, and shuns
Approaching fate; then all his martial skill
Undaunted summons. His forsaken spear
Beside him cast, his falchion he unsheaths,
The blade, descending on Tigranes' arm,
That instant struggling to redeem his lance,
The nervous hand dissevers. Pale affright
Unmans the Persian; while his active foe
Full on his neck discharg'd the rapid sword,
Which open'd wide the purple gates of death.
Low sinks Tigranes in eternal shade.
His prostrate limbs the conqueror bestrides;
Then in a tuft of blood distilling hair
His hand entwining, from the mangled trunk
The head disjoins, and whirls with matchless strengt
Among the adverse legions. All in dread
Recoil'd, where'er the ghastly visage flew
In sanguine circles, and pursu'd its track
Of horror through the air. Not more amaz'd,
A barb'rous nation, whom the cheerful dawn
Of science ne'er illumin'd, view on high
A meteor, waving its portentous fires;
Where oft, as superstition vainly dreams,
Some demon sits amid the baneful blaze,
Dispersing plague and desolation round.
Awhile the stern Diomedon remain'd
Triumphant o'er the dire dismay, which froze
The heart of Persia; then with haughty pace
In sullen joy among his gladsome friends
Return'd his station. Still the hostile throng



ernation motionless suspend
rge. Their drooping hearts Phraortes w

'nl can one leader's fate appal this host,
ounts a chain of princes for its chiefs?
Phraortes. From Niphates' ridge
ny subject files. My hardy toil
h pathless woods and deserts hath explored
er's cavern. This unconquer'd hand
om the lion rent his shaggy hide.
ugh this field of slaughter will I chase
nting Greek.' His ardent words revive
ng valor in the van. His lance
i the rear he brandishes. The croud
iis threat'ning ire, affrighted, roll
umbers headlong on the Grecian steel.
ith his trident ocean's angry god
eir vast bottom turns the mighty mass
rs upward, and o'erwhelms the beach.

endous frown'd the fierce Platæan chief
he battle's front. His ample shield
trong bulwark prominent he rais'd,
he line. There thunder'd all the storm
and arrows. His undaunted train
ating ardour charg'd the foe.
r they turn'd the formidable spears,
trench'd the glebe of Marathon in blood,
in dead lay heap'd. Diomedon
the slaughter. From his nodding crest
le plumes shook terror. Asia's host
back, as blasted by the piercing beams
unconquerable sword, which fell
ght'ning's swiftness on disarm'd helms,
nacing Tigranes' doom to all,
ultitude dispers'd. The furious chief,
pass'd round by carnage, and besmear'd
nguine dapps, inflames his warlike friend



'O Dithyrambus, let thy deeds this day
Surmount their wonted lustre. Thou in arms,
Demophilus, worn grey, thy youth recal.
Behold these slaves without resistance bleed.
Advance, my hoary friend. Propitious fame
Smiles on thy years. She grants thy aged hand
To pluck fresh laurels for thy honor'd brow.'

As, when endu'd with Promethean heat,
The molten clay respir'd; a sudden warmth
Glows in the venerable Thespian's veins;
In ev'ry sinew new born vigour swells.
His falchion, thund'ring on Cherasmes' helm,
The forehead cleaves. Ecbatana to war
Sent forth Cherasmes. From her potent gates
He proud in hope her swarming numbers led.
Him Ariazus and Peucestes join'd,
His martial brothers. They attend his fate,
By Dithyrambus pierc'd. Their hoary sire
Shall o'er his solitary palace roam;
Lamenting loud his childless years, shall curse
Ambition's fury, and the lust of war,
Then, pining, bow in anguish to the grave.

Next by the fierce Platæan's fatal sword
Expir'd Damates, once the host and friend
Of fall'n Tigranes. By his side to fight
He left his native bands. Of Syrian birth
In Daphne he resided, near the grove,
Whose hospitable laurels in their shade
Conceal'd the virgin fugitive, averse
To young Apollo. Hither she retir'd
Far from her parent stream. Here fables feign,
Herself a laurel chang'd her golden hair
To verdant leaves in this retreat, the grove
Of Daphne call'd, the seat of rural bliss,
Fann'd by the breath of zephyrs, and with rills
From bubbling founts irriguous, Syria's boast,



ppy rival of Thessalia's vale,
l forever from Damates' eyes.

ophilus, wise leader, soon improves
tage. All the vet'rans of his troop,
: his equals, to condense the files,
et close their bucklers he commands.
ne broad vessel, heavy in her strength,
ell compacted, when a fav'ring gale
s the skilful master to expand
sails at large, her slow but steady course
els throu h myriads of dividing waves;
unresisted, through Barbarian throngs
e hoary phalanx pass'd. Arcadia's sons
su'd more swift. Gigantic Clonius press'd
e yielding Persians, who before him sunk,
ush'd like vile stubble underneath the steps
some glad peasant, vi iting his fields
new sborn harvest. On the gen'ral rout
hraortes look'd intrepid still. He sprang
er hills of carnage to confront the foe.
is own inglorious friends he thus reproach'd.

'Fly then, ye cowards, and desert your chief.
et single here my target shall oppose
he shock of thousands.' Raging, he impels
is deathful point through Aristander's breast.
im Dithyrambus lov'd. A sacred bard,
ever'd for justice. for his verse renown'd,
e sung the deeds of heroes, those who fell,
r those who conquer'd in their country's cause,
h' enraptur'd soul inspiring with the love
f glory, earn'd by virtue. His high strain
he muses favor'd from their neighb'ring bow'rs,
nd bless'd with heav'nly melody his lyre.
o more from Thespia shall his feet ascend
he shady steep of Helicon; no more
he stream divine of Aganippe's fount
edew his lip harmonious; not his hands,
hich, dying, grasp the unforsaken lance,

And prostrate buckler, ever more second
His lofty numbers to the sounding shell.
Lo! Dithyrambus weeps. Amid the rage
Of war and conquest swiftly gushing tears
Find one sad moment's interval to fall
On his pale friend. But soon the victor prove
His stern revenge: Through shield and corsel
His forceful blade divides the Persian's chest;
Whence issue streams of royal blood, deriv'd
From ancestors who sway'd in Ninus old
Th' Assyrian sceptre. He to Xerxes' throne
A tributary satrap rul'd the vales,
Where Tigris swift between the parted hills,
Of tall Niphates drew his foamy tide,
Impregnating the meads. Phraortes sinks,
Not instantly expiring. Still his eyes
Flash indignation, while the Persians fly.

Beyond the Malian entrance of the straits
Th' Arcadians rush; when, unperceiv'd, till fi
Spring from concealment in a thicket deep
New swarms of warriors, clust'ring on the flar
Of these unwary Grecians. Tow'rds the bay
They shrink. They totter on the fearful edg
Which overhangs a precipice. Surpris'd,
The strength of Clonius fails. His giant bulk
Beneath the chieftain of th' assailing band
Falls prostrate. Thespians and Plateans wa
Auxiliar ensigns. They encounter foes,
Resembling Greeks in discipline and arms.
Dire is the shock. What less, than Caria's qu
In their career of victory could check
Such warriors? Fierce she struggles; while th
Of Medes and Cissians carry to the camp
Contagious terror: thence no succour flows.
Demophilus stands firm; the Carian band
At length recoil before him. Keen pursuit
He leaves to others, like th' almighty sire,
Who sits unshaken on his throne, while floods



ents of wrath, o'erwhelm the earth,
inds level on her hills the growth
cedars. Through the yielding crowd
ef and Dithyrambus range,
t, side by side. Thus o'er the field,
ht Alpheus heard the rattling car,
e hoof along his echoing banks,
us coursers, link'd in mutual reins,
ardour equal, beat the dust,
e glories of Olympia's goal.
l heroes on the plain advance,
he Carian rear. Not long the queen
t shame. Her people's dying groans
her bosom. On their bleeding limbs
aternal, feels maternal pangs.
rallies. Goddess-like she turns,
n Pallas with her Gorgon shield
s she covers like th' imperial bird
'er a nest of callow young
road, and pointing fierce her beak,
rstreteh'd. The Thespian's ardent hand
on lives refraining, hastes to snatch
id laurels from that nobler head.
s falchion, swift descending, bears
down, thence glancing, cuts the thong,
her headpiece fast. That goldeen fence
. Thick tresses, unconfin'd, disclose
rries; one, whose summer pride
beauty had begun to fade,
eroic character supply'd,
more awful, as the touch of time
e soft'ning graces. Back he steps,
y wonder. With indignant eyes,
, she advances. Both her hands
rest discharge the furious blade.
l-blow compels him to recede
back, unwounded, though confus'd.
flock around him. From a scene
re *distant* speeds Platæa's chief.



The fair occasion of suspended fight
She seizes, bright in glory wheels away,
And saves her Carian remnant. While his friend
In fervent sounds Diomedon bespake.

'If thou art slain, I curse this glorious day.
Be all thy trophies, be my own accurs'd.'

'The youth, recover'd, answers in a smile—
'I am unhurt. The weighty blow proclaim'd
The queen of Caria, or Bellona's arm.
Our longer stay Demophilus may blame.
Let us prevent his call. This said, their steps
They turn, both striding through empurpled heaps
Of arms, and mangled slain, themselves with gore
Distain'd like two grim tigers, who have fore'd
A nightly mansion, on the desert rais'd
By some lone-wand'ring traveller, then, dy'd
In human crimson, through the forest deep
Back to their covert's dreary gloom retire.

Stern Artemisia, sweeping o'er the field,
Bursts into Asia's camp. A furious look
She casts around. Abrocomes remote
With Hyperanthes from the king were sent.
She sees Argestes in that quarter chief,
Who from battalions numberless had spar'd
Not one to succour, but his malice gorg'd
With her distress. Her anger now augments.
Revenge frowns gloomy on her darken'd brow.
He cautious moves to Xerxes, where he sat
High on his car. She follows. Lost her helm,
Resign'd to sportive winds her cluster'd locks,
Wild, but majestic like the waving boughs
Of some proud elm, the glory of the grove,
And full in foliage. Her emblazon'd shield
With gore is tarnish'd. Pale around are seen
All faint, all ghastly from repeated wounds
Her bleeding soldiers. Brandishing her sword,
To them she points, to Xerxes then she speaks.



ehold these mangled Carians, who have spent
r vital current in the king's defence,
in his sight; while Medes and Cissians fled,
ese protected, whom Argestes saw
u'd by slaughter to thy very camp,
eft unhelp'd to perish. Ruling sire,
Horomazes be thy name, or Jove,
hee appealing, of the king I claim
y for justice. Monarch, to my arm
: him a prey. Let Artemisia's truth
tise his treason.' With an eye submiss,
ien obsequious, and a soothing tone
heat the king, to moderate her ire
estes utters these fallacious words.

lay Horomazes leave the fiend at large
blast my earthly happiness, confine
d the horrors of his own abode
ghost hereafter, if the sacred charge
Kerxes' person was not my restraint,
sole restraint! To him our all is due,
all how trifling, with his safety weigh'd,
preservation I prefer to fame,
l bright occasion for immortal deeds
ego in duty. Else my helpful sword,
: heroine of Asia, hadst thou seen
ong the foremost blazing. Lo! the king
yal present will on thee bestow,
fumes and precious unguents on the dead,
olden wreath to each survivor brave.'

.w'd by her spirit, by the flatt'rer's spell
uded, languid through dismay and shame
his defeat, the monarch for a time
mute, at length unlock'd his falt'ring lips.

Thou hear'st, great princess. Rest content. H
tify. Yet farther. I proclaim
ee of my train first councellor and chief.

O eagle-ey'd discernment in the king!
O wisdom equal to his boundless power!
The purpled sycophant exclaims. 'Thou seest
Her matchless talents. Wanting her, thy fleet,
The floating bulwark of our hopes, laments,
Foil'd in her absence, in her conduct safe.
Thy penetrating sight directs the field;
There let her worth be hazarded no more.'

'Thy words are wise, the blinded prince rejoins.
Return, brave Carian, to thy naval charge.'

Thus to remove her from the royal ear
Malicious guile prevails. Redoubled rage
Swells in her bosom. Demaratus sees
And calms the storm by rend'ring up his charge
To her maternal hand. Her son belov'd
Dispels the furies. Then the Spartan thus.

'O Artemisia, of the king's command
Be thou observant. To thy slaughter'd friends
Immediate care, far other, than revenge,
Is due. The ravens gather. From his nest
Among those clifts the eagle's rapid flight
Denotes his scent of carnage. Thou, a Greek,
Well know'st the duty sacred to the dead.
Depart; thy guide is piety. Collect,
For honorable sepulchres prepare
Those bodies, mark'd with honorable wounds.
I will assist thee. Xerxes will entrust
To my command a chosen guard of horse.'

As oft, when storms in summer have o'ercast
The night with double darkness, only pierc'd
By heav'n's blue fire, while thunder shakes the pole,
The orient sun, diffusing genial warmth,
Refines, the troubled air; the blast is mute;
Death-pointed flames disperse; and placid Jove
Looks down in smiles: so prudence from the lips



saratus, by his tone, his mien,
eet strength'ning smooth persuasion's flow,
i'd her spirit. She with him departs.
ig assigns a thousand horse to guard
strious exile, and heroic dame.





LEONIDAS.

BOOK VI.



THE ARGUMENT.

The Grecian commanders after the pursuit retire for refreshment to a cave in the side of mount Oeta. Demophilus returns to the camp; Diomedon remains in the cave: while Dithyrambus, discovering a passage through it, ascends to the temple of the Muses. After a long discourse with Melissa, the daughter of Oileus, she entrusts him with a solemn message to Leonidas. Dithyrambus deputes this charge to Megistias, the augur. Leonidas, recalling the forces, first engaged, sends down a fresh body. Diomedon and Dithyrambus are permitted on their own request to continue in the field with the Platæans. By the advice of Diomedon the Grecians advance to the broadest part of Thermopylæ, where they form a line of twenty in depth, consisting of the Platæans, Mantineans, Tegeans, Thebans, Corinthians, Phliasians and Myceneans. The Spartans compose a second line in a narrower part. Behind them are placed the light armed troops under Alpheus, and further back a phalanx of Locrians under Medon, the son of Oileus. Dieneces commands the whole.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK VI.

NOW Dithyrambus and Platæa's chief,
Their former post attaining, had rejoin'd
Demophilus. Recumbent on his shield
Phraortes, gasping there, attracts their sight.
To him in pity Thespia's gallant youth
Approaching, thus his gen'rous soul express'd—

'Liv'st thou, brave Persian? By propitious Jove,
From whom the pleasing stream of mercy flows
Through mortal bosoms, less my soul rejoic'd,
When fortune bless'd with victory my arm,
Than now to raise thee from this field of death.'

His languid eyes the dying prince unclos'd,
Then with expiring voice. 'Vain man, forbear
To proffer me, what soon thyself must crave.
The day is quite extinguish'd in these orbs.
One moment fate allows me to disdain
Thy mercy, Grecian. Now I yield to death.'

This effort made, the haughty spirit fled.
So shoots a meteor's transitory gleam
Through nitrous folds of black nocturnal clouds,
Then dissipates forever. O'er the corse
His rev'rend face Demophilus inclin'd,
Pois'd on his lance, and thus address'd the slain.

'Alas! how glorious were that bleeding breast,
Had justice brac'd the buckler on thy arm,
And to preserve a people bade thee die.
Who now shall mourn thee? Thy ungrateful king,



Will soon forget thy worth. Thy native land
May raise an empty monument, but feel
No public sorrow. Thy recorded name
Shall wake among thy countrymen no sighs
For their lost hero. What to them avail'd
Thy might, thy dauntless spirit? Not to guard
Their wives, their offspring from th' oppressor's han
But to extend oppression didst thou fall,
Perhaps with inborn virtues in thy soul,
Which, but thy froward destiny forbade,
By freedom cherish'd, might have bless'd mankind.
All bounteous nature, thy impartial laws
To no selected race of men confine
The sense of glory, fortitude, and all
The nobler passions, which exalt the mind,
And render life illustrious. These thou plant'st
In ev'ry soil. But freedom like the sun
Must warm the gen'rous seeds. By her alone
They bloom, they flourish; while oppression blasts
The tender virtues: hence a spurious growth,
False honor, savage valor taint the soul,
And wild ambition: hence rapacious pow'r
The ravag'd earth unpeoples, and the brave,
A feast for dogs, th' ensanguin'd field bestrew.'

He said. Around the venerable man
The warriors throng'd attentive. Conquest hush'd
Its joyful transports. O'er the horrid field,
Rude scene so late of tumult, all was calm.
So when the song of Thracian Orpheus drew
To Hebrus' margin from their dreary seats
The savage breed, which Hæmus, wrapp'd in cloud
Pangæus cold, and Rhodopean snows
In blood and discord nurs'd, the soothing strain
Flow'd with enchantment through the ravish'd ear,
Their fierceness melted, and amaz'd they learn'd
The sacred laws of justice, which the bard
Mix'd with the music of his heav'nly string.

me th' Arcadians with inverted arms
ers, sad and solemn on their shields
limbs of Clonius bore along
a gen'ral woe. The noblest corse,
acle of carnage, passing by
last honors, which the dead partake,
thyrambus. Swift his melted eye
Phraortes on the rock supine;
he sage Demophilus he look'd
d spake. 'My heart retains thy words.
may witness, how rapacious pow'r
unpeoples. Clonius is no more.
Greece lamented, will acquire
tomb. This gallant Persian, crush'd
by fortune, both'd in blood, still warm,
rgotten by his thankless king;
/ me neglected shall remain
orse.' The good old man replies.

n'rous child, deserving that success,
hath gain'd! When vital breath is fled
ls, our foes are equal dust. Both claim
al passage to that future seat
where no enmity revives.
eek and Persian will together quaff
rthine bow'rs the cup of bliss
. Hiro, thy valor slew on earth,
ess'd region thou mayst find a friend.'

d, the ready Thespians he commands
raortes from his bed of death,
irpled rock. Outstreteh'd on targets broad,
by hands late hostile, now humane,
s Clonius to the fun'ral pyre.

not distant from the Phocian wall
Eta's cloven side had nature form'd
s windings. This in moss she clad;
he entrance downward from the roots



She hung the shaggy trunks of branching firs,
To heav'n's hot ray impervious. Near the mo
Reluecnt laurels spread before the sun
A broad and vivid foliage. High above,
The hill was darken'd by a solemn shade,
Diffus'd from ancient cedars. To this cave
Diomedon, Demophilus resort,
And Thespia's youth. A deep recess appears,
Cool, as the azure grot where Thetis sleeps
Beneath the vaulted ocean. Whisper'd sounds
Of waters, trilling from the riven stone
To feed a fountain on the rocky floor,
In purest streams o'erflowing to the sea,
Allure the warriors, hot with toil and thirst
To this retreat serene. Against the sides
Their disencumber'd hands repose their shield
The helms they loosen from their glowing chee
Propp'd on their spears, they rest; when Agis l
From Lacedæmon's leader these commands.

'Leonidas recalls you from your toils,
Ye meritorious Greciana. You have reap'd
The first bright harvest on the field of fame.
Our eyes in wonder from the Phocian wall
On your unequall'd deeds incessant gaz'd.'

To whom Platæa's chief. 'Go, Agis, say
To Lacedæmon's ruler, that, untir'd,
Diomedon can yet exalt his spear,
Nor feels the armour heavy on his limbs.
Shall I then quit the contest! Ere he sinks,
Shall not this early sun again behold
The slaves of Xerxes tremble at my lance,
Should they adventure on a fresh assault!"

To him the Thespian youth. 'My friend, n
To noble actions, since thy gen'rous heart
Intent on fame disdains to rest, O grant,
I too thy glorious labors may partake,

i once more to imitate thy deeds.
ıtlest Agis, Sparta's king entreat
ımand us from the field of war.'

:reevering heroes, he reply'd,
rn, will Sparta's king entreat
ımand you from the field of war.'

terpos'd Demophilus. 'O friend
t to conquest brave Platæa's sons;
lov'd offspring of the dearest man,
estore a brother to my eyes;
ur magnanimity applauds:
leet, that unabating toil
ıe mightiest. Valor will repine,
weak hand obeys the heart no more.
ining through the weight of years,
ssign a measure to your strength.
ı find your vigor undecay'd,
ugment your glory. So, when time
your whiten'd heads the helm aside;
he temples your enfeebled arms
; their consecrated shields, the land
/e you life, in her defence employ'd,
by honors, doubled on your age,
he gen'rous labours of your prime.'

: the senior, and forsook the cave.
he fount Dionedon receives
wing waters in his concave helm,
; thus the genius of the stream.

:r thou art, divinity unstain'd
r fountain, till unsparing Mars
nage round thee, bounteous are thy streams
ho ill repay thee. I again
-gleaming current must pollute,
a'd with gore, shall tinge the Malian slime.'



He said, and lifted in his brimming casque
The bright, refreshing moisture. Thus repairs
The spotted panther to Hydaspes' side,
Or eastern Indus, feasted on the blood
Of some torn deer, which nigh his cruel grasp
Had roam'd, unheeding, in the secret shade;
Rapacious o'er the humid brink he stoops,
And in the pure and fluid crystal cools
His reeking jaws. Mean time the Thespian's eye
Roves round the vaulted space; when sudden sounds
Of music, utter'd by melodious harps,
And melting voices, distant, but in tones
By distance soften'd while the echoes sigh'd
In lulling replication, fill the vault
With harmony. In admiration mute,
With nerves unbrac'd by rapture, he, entranc'd,
Stands like an eagle, when his parting plumes
The balm of sleep relaxes, and his wings
Fall from his languid side. Platæa's chief,
Observing, rous'd the warrior. 'Son of Mars,
Shall music's softness from thy bosom steal
The sense of glory? From his neigh'ring camp
Perhaps the Persian sends fresh nations down.
Soon in bright steel Thermopylæ will blaze,
Awake. Accustom'd to the clang of arms,
Intent on vengeance for invaded Greece,
My ear, my spirit in this hour admit
No new sensation, nor a change of thought.'

The Thespian, starting from oblivious sloth
Of ravishment and wonder, quick reply'd.

'These sounds were more, than human. Hark! Again!
O honor'd friend, no adverse banner streams
In sight. No shout proclaims the Persian freed
From his late terror. Deeper let us plunge
In this mysterious dwelling of the nymphs,
Whose voices charm its gloom.' In smiles rejoin'd
Diomedon. 'I see thy soul enthrall'd



Me thou wouldst rank among th' unletter'd race
Of yon Barbarians, should I press thy stay.
Time favors too. Till Agis be return'd,
We cannot act. Indulge thy eager search;
Here will I wait, a sentinel unmov'd,
To watch thy coming.' In exploring haste
Th' impatient Thespian penetrates the cave.
He finds it bounded by a steep ascent
Of rugged steps; where down the hollow rock
A modulation clear, distinct and slow,
In movement solemn, from a lyric string,
Dissolves the stagnant air to sweet accord
With these sonorous lays. Celestial maids!
While, from our cliffs contemplating the war,
We celebrate our heroes, O impart
Orphean magic to the pious strain!
That from the mountain we may call the groves,
Swift motion through these marble fragments breath
To overleap the high Œtæan ridge,
And crush the fell invaders of our peace.

The animated hero upward springs
Light, as a kindled vapour, which, confin'd
In subterranean cavities, at length
Pervading, rives the surface, to enlarge
The long imprison'd flame. Ascending soon,
He sees, he stands abash'd, then rev'rent kneels.

An aged temple with inseulptur'd forms
Of Jove's harmonious daughters, and a train
Of nine bright virgins, round their priestess rang'd,
Who stood in awful majesty, receive
His unexpected feet. The song is hush'd.
The measur'd movement on the lyric chord
In faint vibration dies. The priestess sage,
Whose elevated port and aspect rose
To more than mortal dignity, her lyre
Consigning graceful to attendant hands,
Looks with reproof. The loose, unsever'd hair

Shades his inclining forehead ; while a flush
Of modest crimson dyes his youthful cheek.
Her pensive visage softens to a smile
On worth so blooming, which she thus accosts—

'I should reprove thee, inadvertent youth,
Who through the sole access, by nature left
To this pure mansion, with intruding steps
Dost interrupt our lays. But rise. Thy sword
Perhaps embellish'd that triumphant scene,
Which wak'd these harps to celebrating notes.
What is the impress on thy warlike shield ?'

'A golden eagle on my shield I bear,'
Still bending low, he answers. She pursues—

'Art thou possessor of that glorious orb,
By me distinguish'd in the late defeat
Of Asia, driv'n before thee ? Speak thy name.
Who is thy sire ? Where lies thy native seat ?
Com'st thou for glory to this fatal spot,
Or from Barbarian violence to guard
A parent's age, a spouse, and tender babes,
Who call thee father ?' Humbly he again—

'I am of Thespia, Dithyrambus nam'd,
The son of Harmatides. Snatch'd by fate,
He to his brother, and my second sire,
Demophilus, consign'd me. Thespia's sons
By him are led. His dictates I obey,
Him to resemble strive. No infant voice
Calls me a father. To the nuptial vow
I am a stranger, and among the Greeks
The least entitled to thy partial praise.'

'None more entitled,' interpos'd the dame.
'Deserving hero! thy demeanor speaks,
It justifies the fame, so widely spread,
Of Harmatides' heir. O grace and pride



it fair city, which the Muses love,
an accepted visitant I hail
s their ancient temple. Thou shalt view
sacred haunts.' Descending from the dome,
us pursues—'First know, my youthful hours
exercis'd in knowledge. Homer's Muse
ily meditation won my soul,
ny young spirit mix'd undying sparks
own rapture. By a father, sage,
cted, cities, manners, men I saw,
institutes and customs. I return'd.
nise of Locris call'd me to sustain
ly function here. Now throw thy sight
that meadow, whose enliven'd blades
n the breeze, and glisten in the sun
l the hoary fane. My bleating train
urish'd there, a spot of plenty, spar'd
his surrounding wilderness. Remark
uid mirror, edg'd by shrubs and flow'rs;
s of my culture, flow'rs, by Iris dress'd.
us that smiling concave in the hill,
pointed craggs are soften'd to the sight
and grapes.' She pauses; while around
, delighted, groves, in more delight
) the spot returning, where she stood
: in semblance, o'er the place
ng awful, as Minerva wise,
t like Juno, like Diana pure,
t more pure, than fair. The beauteous lake,
nes wide-branching, falls of water clear,
ultifarious glow on Flora's lap
l attraction, as her gracious lips
e their tale. 'In solitude remote
have dwelt contemplative, serene.
ough the rocks responsive to my lyre,
h' Amphictyons in assembly full.
at this shrine their annual vows they pay,
sur'd declamation I repeat
nise of Greece, her liberty and laws.
ne *the hinds*, who tend their wand'ring goats

In these rude purlieus, modulate their pipes
To smoother cadence. Justice from my tongue
Dessention calms, which ev'n in deserts rend
The unquiet heart of man. Now furious war
My careful thoughts engages, which delight
To help the free. th' oppressor to confound.
Thy feet auspicious fortune thither brings.
In thee a noble messenger I find.
Go, in these words Leonidas address.
'Melissa, priestess of the tuneful nine,
By their behests invites thy honor'd feet
To her divine abode. Thee, first of Greeks,
To conference of high import she calls.'

Th' obedient Thespian down the holy cave
Returns. His swiftness suddenly prevents
His friend's impatience, who salutes him thus—

'Let thy adventure be hereafter told.
Look yonder. Fresh battalions from the camp
File through the Phocian barrier to construct
Another phalanx, moving tow'r of war,
Which scorns the strength of Asia. Let us arr
That, ready station'd in the glorious van,
We may secure permission from the king
There to continue, and renew the fight.'

That instant brings Megistias near the grot.
To Sparta's phalanx his parternal hand
Was leading Menalippus. Not unheard
By Dithyrambus in their slow approach,
The father warns a young and lib'ral mind.

'Sprung from a distant boundary of Greece,
A foreigner in Sparta, cherish'd there,
Instructed, honor'd, nor unworthy held
To fight for Lacedæmon, in her line
Of discipline and valor. lo! my son,
The hour is come to prove thy gen'rous hearts

That in thy hand, not ill-entrusted, shine
The spear and buckler to maintain the cause
Of thy protectress. Let thy mind recall
Leonidas. On yonder bulwark plac'd,
He overlooks the battle; he discerns
The bold and fearful. May the gods, I serve,
Grant me to hear Leonidas approve
My son! No other boon my age implores.'

The augur paus'd. The animated cheek
Of Menalippus glows. His eager look
Demands the fight. This struck the tender sire,
Who then with moisten'd eyes. Remember too,
A father sees thy danger. Oh! my child,
To me thy honor, as to thee, is dear;
Yet court not death. By ev'ry filial tie,
By all my fondness, all my cares I sue!
Amid the conflict, or the warm pursuit
Still by the wise Dieneces abide.
His prudent valor knows th' unerring paths
Of glory. He admits thee to his side.
He will direct thy ardour. Go'——They part.

Megistias, turning, is accosted thus
By Dithyrambus—'Venerable seer,
So may that son, whose merit I esteem,
Whose precious head in peril I would die
To guard, return in triumph to thy breast,
As thou deliver'st to Laconia's king
A high and solemn message. While anew
The line is forming, from th' embattled field
I must not stray, unsill'd. A sacred charge
Through hallow'd lips will best approach the king.'

The Acar'nanian in suspense remains
And silence. Dithyrambus quick relates
Melissa's words, describes the holy grot,
Then quits th' instructed augur, and attends
Diomedon's loud call. That fervid chief



Was reassuming his distinguish'd arms,
Which, as a splendid recompense, he bore
From grateful Athens, for achievements bold;
When he with brave Miltiades redeem'd
Her domes from Asian flames. The sculptur'd helm
Incloss'd his manly temples. From on high
A four-fold plumage nodded; while beneath
A golden dragon with effulgent scales,
Itself the crest, shot terror. On his arm
He brac'd his buckler. Bord'ring on the rim,
Gorgonian serpents twin'd. Within, the form
Of Pallas, martial goddess, was emboss'd.
Low, as her feet, the graceful tunic flow'd.
Betwixt two gryffins on her helmet sat
A sphynx with wings expanded; while the face
Of dire Medusa on her breastplate frown'd.
One hand supports a javelin, which confounds
The pride of kings. The other leads along
A blooming virgin, Victory, whose brow
A wreath encircles. Laurels she presents;
But from her shoulders all her plumes were shorn,
In favor'd Athens ever now to rest.
This dread of Asia on his mighty arm
Diomedon uprear'd. He snatch'd his lance,
Then spake to Dithyrambus. 'See, my friend,
Alone of all the Grecians, who sustain'd
The former onset, inexhausted stand
Platæa's sons. They well may keep the field,
Who with unslacken'd nerves endur'd that day,
Which saw ten myriads of Barbarians driv'n
Back to their ships, and Athens left secure.
Charge in our line. Amid the foremost rank
Thy valour shall be plac'd to share command,
And ev'ry honor with Platæa's chief.'

He said no more, but tow'rds the Grecian van
Impetuous, ardent strode. Now slow behind
The pride of Thespia, Dithyrambus mov'd
Like youthful Hermes in celestial arms;

When lightly graceful with his feather'd feet
Along Scamander's flow'ry verge he pass'd
To aid th' incens'd divinities of Greece
Against the Phrygian tow'rs. Their eager haste
Soon brings the heroes to th' embattling ranks,
Whom thus the brave Diomedon exhorts.

'Not to contend, but vanquish are ye come.
Here in the blood of fugitives your spears
Shall, unoppos'd, be stain'd. My valiant friends,
But chief, ye men of Sparta, view that space,
Where from the Malian gulph more distant rise
Th' Œtæan rocks, and less confine the straits.
There if we range, extending wide our front,
An ampler scope to havoc will be giv'n.'

To him Dieneces—'Platæan friend,
Well dost thou counsel. On that widening ground
Close to the mountain place thy vet'ran files.
Proportion'd numbers from thy right shall stretch
Quite to the shore in phalanx deep like thine.
The Spartans wedg'd in this contracted part
Will I contain. Behind me Alpheus waits
With lighter bodies. Further back the line
Of Locris forms a strong reserve.' He said.
The diff'rent bands, confiding in his skill,
Move on successive. The Platæns first
Against the hill are station'd. In their van
Is Dithyrambus rank'd. Triumphant joy
Distends their bosoms, sparkles in their eyes.

Bless'd be the great Diomedon, they shout,
Who brings another hero to our line.
Hail! Dithyrambus, Hail! illustrious youth.
Had tender age permitted, thou hadst gain'd
An early palm at Marathon. His post
He takes. His gladness blushes on his cheek
Amid the foremost rank. Around him croud
The long-try'd warriors. Their unnumber'd scars

Discov'ring; they in ample phrase recount
Their various dangers. He their wounds surveys
In veneration, nor disdains to hear
The oft-repeated tale. From Sparta's king
Return'd, the gracious Agis these address'd—

'Leonidas salutes Platæa's chief
And Dithyrambus. To your swords he grants
A further effort with Platæa's band,
If yet by toil unconquer'd—but I see,
That all, unyielding, court the promis'd fight.
Hail! glorious veterans. This signal day
May your victorious arms augment the wreaths
Around your venerable heads, and grace
Thermopylæ with Marathonian fame.'

This said, he hastens back. Mean time advance
The Mantinean, Diophantus brave,
Then Hegesander, Tegea's dauntless chief,
Who near Diomedon in equal range
Erect their standards. Next the Thebans form.
Alemæon, bold Eupalamus succeed
With their Corinthian and Phliasian bands.
Last on the Malian shore Mycenæ's youth
Aristobulus draws. From Œta's side
Down to the bay in well-connected length
Each gleaming rank contains a hundred spears,
While twenty bucklers ev'ry file condense.
A sure support. Dieneces behind
Arrays the Spartans. Godlike Agis here,
There Menalippus by their leader stand
Two bulwarks. Breathing ardour in the rear,
The words of Alpheus fan the growing flame
Of expectation through his light-arm'd foree;
While Polydorus present in his thoughts
To vengeance sharpens his indignant soul.

No foe is seen. No distant shout is heard.
This pause of action Dithyrambus chose.



scene on Œta to his friend
urge; portray'd Melissa's form,
: mandate; when Platæa's chief—

ation of a female mind
claim worthy to obtain
noe, she asks. 'This wond'rous dame
mus conceives some lofty thought
e slaves, who loiter in their camp,
ur women. But, my gentle friend,
mbus, whom the liquid spell
hants, should I reproach the gods,
me cold to music's pleasing pow'r?
hank them, that the soft'ning charm
: numbers ne'er dissolv'd my soul?
, thy valor breaks that charm,
enrapture, not unman thy breast.'

his friend—'Doth he, whose lays record
' Priam and the Grecian fame,
olve thy spirit? Yet he flows
eetness, harmony can breathe.'

' gods,' Diomedon rejoins.
ighty muse. I see the car
hilles, see th' encumber'd wheels
driv'n, and clotted with their gore.
demands my soul's esteem,
ylus of Athens. I have seen
girt by Furies, while she swell'd
umbers. Him in equal rage
s foes o'whelming I beheld
. If Phœbus would diffuse
ough ev'ry bard, the tuneful band
emselves find heroes for their songs.
Hermatides, lift thine eye
oint, remotest in the bay.
ing clouds, which o'er the billows fleet
ound the jutting land, are sails.

Th' Athenian pendant hastens to salute
Leonidas. O Æschylus, my friend,
First in the train of Phœbus, and of Mars,
Be thou on board! Swift-bounding o'er the waves,
Come and be witness to heroic deeds!
Brace thy strong harp with loftier-sounding chords
To celebrate this battle! Fall, who may;
But if they fall with honor, let their names
Round festive goblets in thy numbers ring,
And joy, not grief, accompany the song.'

Conversing thus, their courage they beguil'd,
Which else impatient of inactive hours
At long-suspended glory had repin'd.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK VII.

The nations round give ear. The muses breath
Their inspiration through her spotless soul,
Whose wonders in eternity. She calls
Of these. O sway'd the first of Greeks,
Forgave her calm. The cliff's projecting head
With a kind a scope
Some fair, some certain theme thy skilful eye
And best direct the fight. Medon's sire
Was ever present to the king in thought,
Medon. Lead Oileus' son.
Before the daughter of Oileus place
Swelling seed. They hasten to the cave.
Oileus. Through the rock
Fane.
Like the god of morning from the cell
Night, when shedding cheerfulness and day
And with dewy gems,
Lacedæmon's king,
Majestically graceful and serene,
Of his sequestration. On the face
Rapture glows
Like the godlike man.
Proffer'd hand,
Like snow, secure'd,
Dignity of look
Revered by all, she spake.

Which to him, directed by the gods
Those things which Nestor's sequel'd.
Muses to muse. She leads the king
Nestor, and Menestius down
The rocky verge,
The mountains. While they p
Those marble manners view.
They were hew
Those mountainous sea
With these
Of Orpheus from their seat



LEONIDAS.

BOOK VII.

MEGISTIAS, urging to unwonted speed
His aged steps, by Dithyrambus charg'd
With sage Melissa's words, had now rejoin'd
The king of Lacedæmon. At his side
Was Maron posted, watchful to receive
His high injunctions. In the rear they stood
Behind two thousand Locrians, deep-array'd
By warlike Medon, from Oileus sprung.
Leonidas to them his anxious mind
Was thus disclosing—'Medon, Maron, hear.
From this low rampart my exploring eye
But half commands the action, yet hath mark'd
Enough for caution. Yon barbarian camp,
Immense, exhaustless, deluging the ground
With myriads, still o'erflowing, may consume
By endless numbers, and unceasing toil
The Grecian strength. Not marble is our flesh,
Nor adamant our sinews. Sylvan pow'rs,
Who dwell on Oeta, your superior aid
We must solicit. Your stupendous cliffs
In those close rocks, and branchless trunks contain
More fell annoyance, than the arm of man.'

He ended; when Megistias. 'Virtuous king,
Melissa, priestess of the tuneful nine,
By their behests invites thy honor'd feet
To her chaste dwelling' seated on that hill.
To conference of high import she calls
Thee, first of Grecians.' Medon interpos'd.

'She is my sister. Justice rules her ways
With piety and wisdom. To her voice

The nations round give ear. The muses breathe
Their inspiration through her spotless soul,
Which borders on divinity. She calls
On thee. O truly styl'd the first of Greeks,
Regard her call. Yon cliff's projecting head
To thy discernment will afford a scope
More full, more certain; thence thy skilful eye
Will best direct the fight, Melissa's sire
Was ever present to the king in thought,
Who thus to Medon. 'Lead Oileus' son.
Before the daughter of Oileus place
My willing feet.' They hasten to the cave.
Megistias, Maron follow. Through the rock
Leonidas, ascending to the fane,
Rose like the god of morning from the cell
Of night, when, shedding cheerfulness and day
On hill and vale emblaz'd with dewy gems,
He gladdens nature. Lacedæmon's king,
Majestically graceful and serene,
Dispels the rigour in that solemn seat
Of holy sequestration. On the face
Of pensive-ey'd religion rapture glows
In admiration of the god-like man.
Advanc'd Melissa. He her proffer'd hand,
In hue, in purity, like snow, receiv'd.
A heav'n-illumin'd dignity of look
On him she fix'd. Rever'd by all, she spake.

Hail! chief of men, selected by the gods
For purer fame than Hercules acquir'd.
This hour allows no pause. She leads the king
With Medon, Maron, and Megistias down
A slope, declining to the mossy verge,
Which terminates the mountain. While they move
She thus proceeds. These marble masses view
Which lie dispers'd around you. They were hewn
From yonder quarry. Note those pond'rous blocks
The silvan offspring of that hill. With these
At my request th' Amphictyons from their seats



Of gen'ral council piously decreed
To raise a dome, the ornament of Greece.
Observe those wither'd firs, those mould'ring oaks,
Down that declivity, half-rooted, bent.
Inviting human force——Then look below.
There lies Thermopylæ.' 'I see, exclaims
The high-conceiving hero. I recall
Thy father's words and forecast. He presag'd,
I should not find his daughter's counsel vain.
He to accomplish what thy wisdom plans,
Hath amplest means supply'd. Go, Medon, bring
The thousand peasants from th' Oilean vale
Detach'd. Their leader Meliboeus bring.
Fly, Maron. Ev'ry instrument provide
To fell the trees, to drag the massy beams,
To lift the broad-hewn fragments.' 'Are not these
For sacred use reserv'd, Megistias said?
Can these be wielded by the hand of Mars
Without pollution?' In a solemn tone
The priestess answer'd. 'Rev'rend man, who bear'st
Pontific wreaths, and thou, great captain, hear.
Forbear to think, that my unprompted mind,
Calm and sequester'd in religion's peace,
Could have devis'd a stratagem of war;
Or, unpermitted, could resign to Mars
These rich materials, gather'd to restore
In strength and splendor yon decrepid walls,
And that time-shaken roof. Rejecting sleep,
Last night I lay, contriving swift revenge
On these Barbarians, whose career profane
O'erturns the Grecian temples, and devotes
Their holy bow'rs to flames. I left my couch,
Long ere the sun his orient gates unbarr'd.
Beneath yon beech my pensive head reclin'd.
The rivulets, the fountains, warbling round,
Attracted slumber. In a dream I saw
Calliope. Her sisters, all with harps,
Were rang'd around her; as their Parian forms
Shew in the temple. Dost thou sleep, she said?

Melissa, dost thou sleep? The barb'rous host
Approaches Greece. The first of Grecians come
By death to vanquish. Priestess, let him hurl
These marble heaps, these consecrated beams,
Our fane itself, to crush the impious ranks.
The hero summon to our sacred hill.
Reveal the promis'd succour. All is due
To liberty against a tyrant's pride.
She struck her shell. In concert full reply'd
The sister lyres. Leonidas they sung
In ev'ry note and dialect yet known,
In measures new, in language yet to come.'

She finish'd. Then Megistias. 'Dear to heav'n
By nations honor'd, and in tow'ring thought
O'er either sex pre-eminent, thy words
To me a soldier and a priest suffice.
I hesitate no longer.' But the king,
Wrapt in extatic contemplation stood,
Revolving deep an answer, which might suit
His dignity and hers. At length he spake—

'Not Lacedæmon's whole collected state
Of senate, people, ephori and kings,
Not the Amphictyons, whose convention holds
The universal majesty of Greece,
E'er drew such rev'rence, as thy single form,
O all-surpassing woman, worthy child
Of time-renown'd Oileus. In thy voice
I hear the goddess liberty. I see
In thy sublimity of look and port
That daughter bright of Eleutherian Jove.
Me thou hast prais'd. My conscious spirit feels,
That not to triumph in thy virtuous praise
Were want of virtue. Yet, illustrious dame,
Were I assur'd, that oracles delude;
That, unavailing, I should spill my blood;
That all the Muses of subjected Greece
Hereafter would be silent, and my name



Be ne'er transmitted to recording time;
There is in virtue for her sake alone,
What should uphold my resolution firm.
My country's laws I never would survive.'

'Mov'd at his words, reflecting on his fate,
She had relax'd her dignity of mind,
Had sunk in sadness; but her brother's helm
Before her beams. Relumining her night,
He through the cave like Hesperus ascends,
Th' Oilean hinds conducting to achieve
The enterprise, she counsels. Now her ear
Is pierc'd by notes, shrill sounding from the vault.
Upstarts a diff'rent band, alert and light,
Athenian sailors. Long and sep'rate files
Of lusty shoulders, eas'd by union, bear
Thick, well-compacted cables, wont to heave
The restiff anchor. To a naval pipe,
As if one soul invigorated all,
And all compos'd one body, they had trod
In equal paces, mazy, yet unbroke
Throughout their passage. So the spinal strength
Of some portentous serpent, whom the heats
Of Libya breed, indissolubly knit,
But flexible, across the sandy plain,
Or up the mountain draws his spotted length,
Or where a winding excavation leads
Through rocks abrupt and wild. Of stature large,
In arms, which shew'd simplicity of strength,
No decoration of redundant art,
With sable horse-hair, floating down his back,
A warrior moves behind. Compos'd in gait,
Austerely grave and thoughtful, on his shield
The democratic majesty he bore
Of Athens. Carv'd in emblematic brass,
Her image stood with Pallas by her side,
And trampled under each victorious foot
A regal crown, one Persin, one usurpt
By her own tyrants, on the well-fought plain



Of Marathon confounded. He commands
These future guardians of their country's weal,
Of gen'ral Greece the bulwarks. Their high deeds,
From Artemisium, from th' empurpled shores
Of Salamis, renown shall echo wide;
Shall tell posterity in latest times,
That naval fortitude controuls the world.
Swift Maron, following, brings a vig'rous band
Of Helots. Ev'ry instrument they wield
To delve, to hew, to heave; and active last
Bounds Melibœus, vigilant to urge
The tardy forward. To Laconia's king
Advanc'd th' Athenian leader, and began—

'Thou godlike ruler of Eurotas, hail!
Thee by my voice Themistocles salutes,
The admiral of Athens. I conduct
By public choice the squadron of my tribe,
And Æschylus am call'd. Our chief hath giv'n
Three days to glory on Eubœa's coast,
Whose promontories almost rise to meet
Thy ken from Oeta's cliffs. This morning saw
The worsted foe, from Artemisium driv'n,
Leave their disabled ships, and floating wrecks
For Grecian trophies. When the fight was clos'd
I was detach'd to bring th' auspicious news,
To bid thee welcome. Fortunate my keel
Hath swiftly borne me. Joyful I concur
In thy attempt. Appris'd by yonder chiefs,
Who met me landing, instant from the ships
A thousand gallant mariners I drew,
Who till the setting sun shall lend their toil.'

'Themistocles and thou accept my heart,'
Leonidas reply'd, and closely strain'd
The brave, the learn'd Athenian to his breast.
'To envy is ignoble, to admire
Th' activity of Athens will become
A king of Sparta, who like thee condemn'd



His country's sloth. But Sparta now is arm'd.
Thou shalt command. Behold me station'd here
To watch the wild vicissitudes of war,
Direct the course of slaughter. To this post
By that superior woman I was call'd.
By long protracted fight lest fainting Greece
Should yield, outnumber'd, my enlighten'd soul
Through her, whom heav'n enlightens, hath devis'd
To whelm the num'rous, persevering foe
In hideous death, and signalize the day
With horrors new to war. The Muses prompt
The bright achievement. Lo! from Athens smiles
Minerva too. Her swift, auspicious aid
In thee we find, and these, an ancient race,
By her and Neptune cherish'd.' Straight he meets
The gallant train, majestic with his arms
Outstretch'd, in this applauding strain he spake—

'O lib'ral people, earliest arm'd to shield
Not your own Athens more, than gen'ral Greece,
You best deserve her gratitude. Her praise
Will rank you foremost on the rolls of fame.'

They hear, they gaze, revering and rever'd.
Fresh numbers muster rushing from the hills,
The thickets round. Melissa, pointing, spake.

'I am their leader. Natives of the hills
Are these, the rural worshippers of Pan,
Who breathes an ardour through their humble minds
To join you warriors. Vassals these, not mine,
But of the Muses, and their hallow'd laws,
Administer'd by me. Their patient hands
Make culture smile, where nature seems to chide;
Nor wanting my instructions, or my pray'rs,
Fertility they scatter by their toil
Around this aged temple's wild domain;
Is Meliboeus here! Thou fence secure
To old Oileus from the cares of time,

Thrice art thou welcome. Useful, wise, belov'd,
Where'er thou sojournest, on Oeta known,
As oft the bounty of a father's love
Thou on Melissa's solitude dost pour,
Be thou director of these mountain hinds.'

Th' important labour to inspiring airs
From flutes and harps in symphony with hymns
Of holy virgins, ardent all perform,
In bands divided under diff'rent chiefs.
Huge timbers, blocks of marble to remove
They first attempted; then assembled stones
Loose in their beds, and wither'd trunks, uptorn
By tempests; next dismember'd from the rock
Broad, rugged fragments; from the mountains hewn
Their venerable firs, and aged oaks,
Which, of their branches by the light'ning bar'd,
Presented still against the blasting flame
'Their hoary pride unshaken. These the Greeks,
But chief th' Athenian mariners, to force
Uniting skill, with massy leavers heave,
With strong-knit cables drag: till, now dispos'd,
Where great Leonidas appoints, the piles
Nod o'er the Straits. This new and sudden scene
Might lift imagination to belief,
That Orpheus and Amphion from their beds
Of ever blooming asphodel had heard
The Muses call; had brought their fabled harps
At whose mellifluent charm once more the trees
Had burst their fibrous bands, and marbles leap'd
In rapid motion from the quarry's womb,
That day to follow harmony in aid
Of gen'rous valor. Fancy might discern
Cerulean Tethys, from her coral grot
Emerging, seated on her pearly car,
With Nereids, floating on the surge below,
To view in wonder from the Malian bay
The Attic sons of Neptune; who forsook



Their wooden walls to range th' Oetæan crags,
To rend the forests, and disjoin the rock.

Meantime a hundred sheep are slain. Their limbs
From burning piles fume grateful. Bounty spreads
A decent board. Simplicity attends.
Then spake the priestess—'Long-enduring chiefs,
Your efforts now accomplish'd, may admit
Refection due to this hard-labour'd train,
Due to yourselves, Her hospitable smile
Wins her well-chosen guests, Laconia's king,
Her brother, Maron, Æschylus divine
With Acarnania's priest. Her first commands
To Melibœus sedulous and blithe
Distribute plenty through the toiling croud.
Then, skreen'd beneath close umbrage of an oak,
Each care-divested chief the banquet shares.'

Cool breezes, whisp'ring, flutter in the leaves,
Whose verdure, pendent in an arch, repel
The west'ring sun's hot glare. Favonius bland
His breath impregnates with exhaling sweets
From flow'ry beds, whose scented clusters deck
The gleaming pool in view. Fast by, a brook
In limpid lapses over native steps
Attunes his cadence to sonorous strings,
And liquid accents of Melissa's maids.
The floating air in melody respires.
A rapture mingles in the calm repast.
Up rises Æschylus. A goblet full
He grasps. 'To those divinities, who dwell
In yonder temple, this libation first,
To thee, benignant hostess, next I pour,
Then to thy fame, Leonidas.' He said.
His breast, with growing heat distended, prompts
His eager hand, to whose expressive sign
One of the virgins cedes her sacred lyre.
Their choral song complacency restrains.
The soul of music, bursting from his touch,
At once gives birth to sentiment sublime.

'O Hercules, and Perseus,' he began,
'Star-spangled twins of Leda, and the rest
Of Jove's immediate seed, your splendid acts
Mankind protected, while the race was rude;
While o'er the earth's unciviliz'd extent
The savage monster, and the ruffian sway'd,
More savage still. No policy, nor laws
Had fram'd societies. By single strength
A single ruffian, or a monster fell.
The legislator rose. Three lights in Greece,
Lycurgus, Solon and Zalecus blaz'd.
Then, substituting wisdom, Jove profuse
Of his own blood no longer, gave us more
In discipline and manners, which can form
A hero like Leonidas, than all
The god-begotten progeny before.
The pupils next of Solon claim the muse.
Sound your hoarse conchs, ye Tritons. You beheld
The Atlantean shape of slaughter wade
Through your astonish'd deeps, his purple arm
Uplifting high before th' Athenian line.
You saw bright conquest, riding on the gale,
Which swell'd their sails; saw terror at their helms
To guide their brazen beaks on Asia's pride.
Her adamantine grapple from their decks
Fate threw, and ruin on the hostile fleet
Inextricably fasten'd. Sound, ye nymphs
Of Oeta's mountains, of her woods and streams;
Who hourly witness to Melissa's worth,
Ye Oreads, Dryads, Naiads, sound her praise.
Proclaim Zaleucus by his daughter grac'd
Like Solon and Lycurgus by their sons.'

Laconia's hero, and the priestess bow'd
Their foreheads grateful to the bard sublime.
She, rising, takes the word. 'More sweet thy lyre
To friendship's ear, than terrible to foes
Thy spear in battle, though the keenest point,
Which ever pierc'd Barbarians. Close we here

The song and banquet. Hark! a distant din
From Asia's camp requires immediate care.'

She leads. Along the rocky verge they pass.
In calm delight Leonidas surveys
All in the order, which he last assign'd;
As o'er Thermopylæ beneath he cast
A wary look. The mountain's farthest crag
Now reach'd, Melissa to the king began—

'Observe that space below, dispers'd in dales,
In hollows, winding through dissever'd rocks.
The slender outlet, skreen'd by yonder shrubs;
Leads to the pass. There stately to my view
The martial queen of Caria yester sun,
Descending, shew'd. Her loudly I reprov'd.
But she, devoted to the Persian king,
In ambush there preserv'd his flying host.
She last retreated; but, retreating, prov'd
Her valor equal to a better cause.
Again I see the heroine approach.'

Megistias then—'I see a powerful arm,
Sustaining firm the large, emblazon'd shield,
Which, fashion'd first in Caria, we have learn'd
To imitate in Greece. Sublime her port
Bespeaks a mighty spirit. Priestess, look.
An act of piety she now performs,
Directing those, perhaps her Carian band,
To bear dead brethren from the bloody field.
Among the horsemen an exalted form
Like Demaratus strikes my searching eye.
To me, recalling his transcendent rank
In Sparta once, he seems a languid sun,
Which dimly sinks in exhalations dark,
Enveloping his radiance.' While he spake,
Intent on martial duty Medon views
The dang'rous thicket; Lacedæmon's chief,
Around the region his consid'rate eye



Extending, marks each movement of the foe.
Th' imperial Persian from his lofty car
Had in the morning's early conflict seen
His vanquish'd army, pouring from the straits
Back to their tents, and o'er his camp dispers'd
In consternation; as a river bursts
Impetuous from his fountain, then, enlarg'd,
Spreads a dead surface o'er some level marsh.
Th' astonish'd king thrice started from his seat;
Shame, fear and indignation rent his breast;
As ruin irresistable were near
To overwhelm his millions. 'Haste,' he call'd
To Hyperanthes, 'haste and meet the Greeks.
Their daring rage, their insolence repel.
From such dishonor vindicate our name.'

His royal brother through th' extensive camp
Obedient mov'd. Deliberate and brave,
Each active prince from ev'ry tent remote,
The hardiest troops he summon'd. Caria's queen,
To Hyperanthes bound by firm esteem
Of worth, unrivall'd in the Persian court,
In solemn pace was now returning slow
Before a band, transporting from the field
Their slain companions to the sandy beach.

She stopp'd, and thus address'd him—'Learn, O prin
From one, whose wishes on thy merit wait,
The only means to bind thy gallant brow
In fairest wreaths. To break the Grecian line
In vain ye struggle, unarray'd and lax,
Depriv'd of union. Try to form one band
In order'd ranks, and emulate the foe.
Nor to secure a thicket next the pass
Forget. Selected numbers station there.
Farewell, young hero. May thy fortune prove
Unlike to mine. Had Asia's millions spar'd
One myriad to sustain me, none had seen
Me quit the dang rous contest. But the head
Of base Argestes on some future day



Shall feel my treasur'd vengeance. From the fleet
I only stay, till burial rites are paid
To these dead Carians. On this fatal strand
May Artemisia's grief appease your ghosts,
My faithful subjects, sacrific'd in vain.'

The hero grateful and respectful heard,
What soon his warmth neglected at the sight
Of spears, which fiam'd innumerable round.
Beyond the rest in lustre was a band,
The satellites of Xerxes. They forsook
Their constant orbit round th' imperial throne
At this dread crisis. To a myriad fix'd,
From their unchanging number they deriv'd
The title of immortals. Light their spears;
Set in pomegranates of refulgent gold,
Or burnish'd silver, were the slender blades,
Magnificent and stately were the ranks.
The prince, commanding mute attention, spake—

'In two divisions part your number, chiefs.
One will I lead to onset. In my ranks
Abrocomes, Hydarnes shall advance,
Pandates, Mindus, Intaphernes brave
To wrest this short-liv'd victory from Greece:
Thou Abradates, by Sosarmes join'd,
Orontes and Mazæus, keep the rest
From action. Future succour they must lend,
Should envious fate exhaust our num'rous files.
For, O pure Mithra, may thy radiant eye
Ne'er see us, yielding to ignoble flight,
The Persian name dishonor. May the acts
Of our renown'd progenitors, who, led
By Cyrus, gave one monarch to the east,
In us revive. O, think, ye Persian lords,
What endless infamy will blast your names;
Should Greece, that narrow portion of the earth,
Your pow'r defy: when Babylon hath low'rd
Her tow'ring crest; when Lydia's pride is quell'd

In Crœsus vanquish'd, when her empire lost
Ecbatana deplores. Ye chosen guard,
Your king's immortal bulwark, O reflect,
What deeds from your superior swords he claims.
You share his largest bounty. To your faith,
Your constancy and prowess he commits
His throne, his person, and this day his fame.'

They wave their banners, blazing in the sun,
Who then three hours tow'rd Hesperus had driv'n
From his meridian height. Amid their shouts
The hoarse-resounding billows are not heard.
Of diff'rent nations, and in diff'rent garb,
Innumerous and vary'd like the shells,
By restless Tethys scatter'd on the beach,
O'er which they trod, the multitude advanc'd,
Straight by Leonidas descry'd. The van
Abrocomes and Hyperanthes led,
Pandates, Mindus. Violent their march
Sweeps down the rocky, hollow-sounding pass.
So, where the unequal globe in mountains swells
A torrent rolls his thund'ring surge between
The steep erected cliffs; tumultuous dash
The waters, bursting on the pointed crags:
The valley roars; the marble channel foams.
Th' undaunted Greeks immoveably withstand
The dire encounter. Soon th' impetuous shock
Of thousands and of myriads shakes the ground.
Stupendous scene of terror! Under hills,
Whose sides, half-arching, o'er the hosts project,
The unabating fortitude of Greece
Maintains her line, th' untrain'd Barbarians charge
In savage fury. With inverted trunks,
Or bent obliquely from the shagged ridge,
The silvan horrors overshade the fight.
The clanging trump, the crash of mingled spears,
The groan of death, and war's discordant shouts
Alarm the echoes in their neighb'ring caves;
Woods, cliffs and shores return the dreadful sounds.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK VIII.



ARGUMENT.

Hyperanthes, discontinuing the fight, while he w
re-enforcements, Teribazus, a Persian rem
for his merit and learning, and highly beloved
peranthes, but unhappy in his passion for A
daughter of Darius, advances from the rest o
my to the rescue of a friend in distress, who lay
ed on the field of battle. Teribazus is attа
Diophantus, the Mantinean, whom he ove
when engaging with Dithyrambus, is himse
Hyperanthes hastens to his succour. A genera
ensues, where Diomedon distinguishes his
Hyperanthes and Abrocomes, partly by their
forts, and partly by the perfidy of the Theba
desert the line, being on the point of forcing
cians, are repulsed by the Lacedæmonians. H
thes composes a select body out of the Persia
ing forces, and, making an improvement in t
cipline, renews the attack; upon which I
changes the disposition of his army: Hyperan
the ablest Persian generals are driven out of t
and several thousands of the barbarians, circu
ed in the pass, are entirely destroyed.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK VIII.

AMID the van of Persia was a youth,
Nam'd Teribazus, not for golden stores,
Not for wide pastures, travers'd o'er by herds,
By fleece-abounding sheep, or gen'rous steeds,
Nor yet for pow'r, nor splendid honors fam'd.
Rich was his mind in ev'ry art divine;
Through ev'ry path of science had he walk'd,
The votary of wisdom. In the years,
When tender down invests the ruddy cheek,
He with the Magi turn'd the hallow'd page
Of Zoroastres. Then his tow'ring thoughts
High on the plumes of contemplation soar'd.
He from the lofty Babylonian fane
With learn'd Chaldæans trac'd the heav'nly sphere,
There numbers o'er the vivid fires, which gleam
On night's bespangled bosom. Nor unheard
Were Indian sages from sequester'd bow'rs,
While on the banks of Ganges they disclos'd
The pow'rs of nature, whether in the woods,
The fruitful glebe, or flow'r, the healing plant,
The limpid waters, or the ambient air,
Or in the purer element of fire.
The realm of old Sesostris next he view'd,
Mysterious Ægypt with her hidden rites
Of Isis and Osiris. Last he sought
Th' Ionian Greeks, from Athens sprung, nor pass'd
Miletus by, which once in rapture heard
The tongue of Thales, nor Priene's walls,
Where wisdom dwelt with Bias, nor the seat
Of Pittacus rever'd on Lesbian shores.

Th' enlightened youth to Susa now return'd,
Place of his birth. His merit soon was dear

To Hyperanthes. It was now the time,
That discontent and murmur on the banks
Of Nile were loud and threat'ning. Chembes there
Thea only faithful stood, a potent lord,
Whom Xerxes held by promis'd nuptial ties
With his own blood. To this Ægyptian prince
Bright Ariana was the destin'd spouse,
From the same bed with ypHeranthes born.
Among her guards was Terizabus nam'd
By that fond brother, tender of her weal.

Th' Ægyptian boundaries they gain. They hear
Of insurrection, of the Pharian tribes
In arms, and Chembes in the tumult slain.
They pitch their tents, at midnight are assail'd,
Surpris'd, their leaders massacred, the slaves
Of Ariana captives borne away,
Her own pavilion fore'd, her person seiz'd
By ruffian hands: when timely to redeem
Her and th' invaded camp from further spoil
Flies Terizabus with a rally'd band,
Swift on her chariot seats the royal fair,
Nor waits the dawn. Of all her menial train
None, but three female slaves are left. Her guide,
Her comforter and guardian, fate provides
In him, distinguish d by his worth alone,
No prince, nor satrap now the single chief
Of her surviving guard. Of regal birth,
But with excelling graces in her soul,
Unlike an eastern princess she inclines
To his consoling, his instructive tongue
An humbled ear. Amid the converse sweet
Her charms, her mind, her virtues he explores,
Admiring. Soon is admiration chang'd
To love; nor loves he sooner, than despairs.
From morn to e'n her passing wheels he guards
Back to Euphrates. Often, as she mounts,
Or quits the car, his arm her weight sustains
With trembling pleasure. His assiduous hand



est fountains wafts the living flood.
n by the fair one's soft command
repose him, at her feet reclin'd;
his lips her lovely forehead bow'd,
is grateful eloquence, which sooth'd
t variety the tedious march,
time. He too would then forget
awhile, in raptures vain entranc'd,
all, and fleeting rays of joy,
cast by more intense despair;
ry clouds, which, op'ning for a time,
ir black folds with gleams of scatter'd light,
fully closing, on the brow of morn
their horrors, and in thickest gloom
r beauty veil. They now approach
of Belus. Hyperanthes leads
Babylon an army to chastise
e of Ægypt. Teribazus here
a his princess, marches bright in steel
is patron's banner, gathers palms
er'd Nile. To Susa he returns,
a's residence, and bears
is heart th' immedicable wound.
veal'd and silent was his pain;
solitary shades he roam'd,
d resort: but o'er his sorrows cast
awn of gladness, and in smiles
his anguish; while the secret flame
his bosom, and its peace consum'd:
till brooding o'er these mournful thoughts.

O wisdom, find relief in thee,
approve my passion? From the snares
only thou wouldst guard my heart.
thyself art charm'd; where softness, grace,
virtue dignify desire.
to love, despairing to possess,
torments, by relentless fate
flicted, is the most severe.

Do I not feel thy warnings in my breast,
That flight alone can save me? I will go
Back to the learn'd Chaldeans, on the banks
Of Ganges seek the sages; where to heav'n
With thee my elevated soul shall tow'r.
O wretched Teribazus! all conspires
Against thy peace. Our mighty lord prepares
To overwhelm the Grecians. Ev'ry youth
Is call'd to war; and I, who lately pois'd
With no inglorious arm the soldier's lance,
Who near the side of Hyperanthes fought,
Must join the throng. How therefore can I fly
From Ariana, who with Asia's queens
The splendid camp of Xerxes must adorn?
Then be it so. Again I will adore
Her gentle virtues. Her delightful voice,
Her gracious sweetness shall again diffuse
Resistless magic through my raviah'd heart;
Till passion, thus with double rage enflam'd,
Swells to destruction in my tortur'd breast,
Then—but in vain through darkness do I search
My fate—despair and fortune be my guides.'

The day arriv'd, when Xerxes first advanc'd
His arms from Susa's gates. The Persian dames,
So were accustom'd all the eastern fair,
In sumptuous cars accompany'd his march,
A beauteous train, by Ariana grac'd.
Her Teribazus follows, on her wheels
Attends and pines. Such woes oppress the youth,
Oppress but not enervate. From the van
He in this second conflict had withstood
The threat'ning frown of adamantine Mars,
He singly, while his bravest friends recoil'd.
His manly temples no tiara bound.
The slender lance of Asia he disdain'd,
And her light target. Eminent he tow'rd,
In Grecian arms the wonder of his foes;
Among th' Ionians were his strenuous limbs



n the gymnic school. A fulgent casque
is head. Before his face and chest
he knees an ample shield was spread.
ns spear he shook. The well aim'd point
Phlasians to the realms of death
r Tegæans, whose indignant chief,
gesander, vengeance breath'd in vain,
aming wounds repuls'd. Thus far unmatch'd
revail'd; when Hyperanthes call'd
t his fainting legions. Now each band
guid courage reinforc'd by rest.
e with Teribazus thus conferr'd
uding prince, 'Thou much deserving youth,
ty warriors in the dang'rous van
: maintain'd the onset, Greece had wept
:ate ranks. The weary'd fight awhile
x, till Abradates strong,
od Mazæus are advanc'd.
he conflict will I give no pause.
prowess, yet by endless toil
: numbers shall exhaust the foe.'

. Immers'd in sadness, scarce reply'd,
nself complain'd the am'rous youth.

o I languish, mourning o'er the fame,
equires. Tormented heart! thou seat
it sorrow, what deceitful smiles
thou borrow from unreal hope
life? at Ariana's feet
ith supplicating knees I bow,
ier pity, and reveal my love.
canst thou climb to yon effulgent orb,
: the splendours, which irradiate heav'n?
aspire to that exalted maid,
xes' sister, rivaling the claim
proudest potentates and kings?
hin her bosom I inspir'd
fervent, as my own, my pure,

Such, as dispelling ev'ry virgin fear,
Might, unrestrain'd, disclose its fond desire,
My love is hopeless: and her willing hand,
Should she bestow it, draws from Asia's lord
On both perdition. By despair benumb'd,
His limbs their action lose. A wish for death
O'ercasts and chills his soul. When sudden cries
From Ariamnes rouse his drooping pow'rs.
Alike in manners they of equal age
Were friends, and partners in the glorious toil
Of war. Together they victorious chas'd
The bleeding sons of Nile, when Ægypt's pride
Before the sword of Hyperanthes fell.
That lov'd companion Teribazus views
By all abandon'd, in his gore outstretch'd
The victor's spoil. His languid spirit starts;
He rushes ardent from the Persian line;
The wounded warrior in his strong embrace
He bears away. By indignation stung,
Fierce from the Grecians Diophantus sends
A loud defiance. Teribazus leaves
His rescu'd friend. His massy shield he rears;
High-brandishing his formidable spear,
He turns intrepid on th' approaching foe.
Amazement follows. On he strides, and shakes
The plumed honors of his shining crest.
Th' ill-fated Greek awaits th' unequal fight,
Pierc'd in the throat, with sounding arms he falls.
Through ev'ry file the Mantineans mourn.
Long on the slain the victor fix'd his sight
With these reflections. By thy splendid arms
Thou art a Greek of no ignoble rank.
From thy ill fortune I perhaps derive
A more conspicuous lustre—What if heav'n
Should add new victims, such as thou, to grace
My undeserving hand? Who knows, but she
Might smile upon my trophies. Oh! vain thought!
I see the pride of Asia's monarch swell
With vengeance fatal to her beauteous head.



antom hopes. Too long, torn heart,
grief contended. Lo! I plant
ment on the verge of death,
l, by despair impell'd
neable bound. No more
backward turn his step,
de his doom. Then cease to heave,
bosom, ev'ry thought be calm
roach of everlasting peace.'

ien a mighty foe drew nigh,
ithyrambus. Ere they join'd,
arrior to the Greek began.

' unconquerable chief, who mow'd
d' That eagle on thy shield
aims thee. To attempt thy force
'd. That my single arm
o meet, accept my thanks, and know,
conquest less employs my soul,
n of thy glorious deeds,
e I cannot fall disgrac'd.'

These words the Thespian youth return'
es from thy gen'rous mouth
n, my desert may claim,
adventure to confront
atch'd. What Grecian hath not mark'
el? From Asia's boundless camp
uail'd thy victorious might.
armour of the Grecian form?
l spear, thy helmet? Whence the weigh
hield? Unlike thy eastern friends,
ome fugitive, who, lost
irtue, art become
tipendiary, that arm,
s triumphant I deplore,
their efforts and success
or from the gods, or men,'

Here Teribazus in a sigh rejoin'd.
'I am to Greece a stranger, am a wretch
To thee unknown, who courts this hour to die,
Yet not ignobly, but in death to raise
My name from darkness, while I end my woes.'

The Grecian then. 'I view thee, and I mourn
A dignity, which virtue only bears,
Firm resolution, seated on thy brow,
Though grief hath dimm'd thy drooping eye, demand
My veneration: and, whatever be
The malice of thy fortune, what the cares,
Infesting thus thy quiet, they create
Within my breast the pity of a friend.
Why then, constraining my reluctant hand
To act against thee, will thy might support
Th' unjust ambition of malignant kings,
The foes to virtue, liberty and peace!
Yet free from rage, or enmity I lift
My adverse weapon. Victory I ask.
Thy life may fate for happier days reserve.'

This said, their beaming lance they protend,
Of hostile hate, or fury both devoid,
As on the Isthmian or Olympic sands
For fame alone contending. Either host,
Pois'd on their arms, in silent wonder gaze.
The fight commences. Soon the Grecian spear,
Which, all the day in constant battle worn
Unnumber'd shields and corselets had transfix'd,
Against the Persian buckler, shiv'ring, breaks,
Its master's arm disarming. Then began
The sense of honor, and the dread of shame
To swell in Dithyrambus. Undismay'd,
He grappled with his foe, and instant seiz'd
His threat'ning spear, before th' uplifted arm
Could execute the meditated wound.
The weapon burst between their struggling grasp
Their hold they loosen, bare their shining swords:



i equal swiftness to defend, or charge
active youth advances or recedes.
v'ry side they traverse. Now direct,
uely now the wheeling blades descend.
is the conflict dubious; when the Greek,
mbling, points his falchion to the ground,
rm depressing, as o'ercome by toil:
e with his buckler cautious he repels
blows, repeated by his active foe.
se trembles for her hero. Joy pervades
anks of Asia; Hyperanthes strides
e the line, preparing to receive
iend triumphant: while the wary Greek
and defensive bears th' assault. At last,
th' incautious fury of his strokes,
'ersian swung his cov'ring shield aside,
ital moment Dithyrambus seiz'd.
darting forward with his feet outstretch'd,
een th' unguarded ribs he plung'd his steel.
ion, grief and terror wing the speed
peranthes. From his bleeding foe
Greek retires, not distant, and awaits
ersian prince. But he with watry cheeks
eehless anguish clasps his dying friend;
whose cold lip with interrupted phrase
accents break. 'O dearest, best of men!
housand thoughts of gratitude and love
ruggling in my heart—O'erpow'ring fate
s my voice the utt'rance—O my friend!
peranthes! Hear my tongue unfold
, had I liv'd, thou never should'st have known,
l thy sister. With despair I lov'd.
ting this honorable doom,
ut regret in Persia's sight and thine
'Th' inexorable hand of fate
hs down his eye-lids, and the gloom of death
eeting light eternally o'ershades.
m Choaspes o'er the blooming verge
atic mother shall bewail; shall strew

Her silver tresses in the crystal wave:
While all the shores re-echo to the name,
Of Teribazus lost. Th' afflicted prince,
Contemplating in tears the pallid corse,
Vents in these words the bitterness of grief.

'Oh! Teribazus! Oh! my friend whose loss
I will deplore for ever. Oh! what pow'r,
By me, by thee offended, clos'd thy breast
To Hyperanthes in distrust unkind!
She would, she must have lov'd thee—now no mo
Thy placid virtues, thy instructive tongue
Shall drop their sweetness on my secret hours.
But in complaints doth friendship waste the tim
Which to immediate vengeance should be given?

He ended, rushing furious on the Greek;
Who, while his gallant enemy expir'd,
While Hyperanthes tenderly receiv'd
The last embraces of his gasping friend,
Stood nigh, reclin'd in sadness on his shield,
And in the pride of victory repin'd.
Unmark'd, his foe approach'd. But forward spr
Diomedon. Before the Thespian youth
Aloft he rais'd his targe, and loudly thus.

'Hold thee, Barbarian, from a life more worth
Than thou and Xerxes with his host of slaves'

His words he seconds with his rapid lance.
Soon a tremendous conflict had ensu'd;
But Intaphernes, Mindus, and a croud
Of Persian lords, advancing, fill the space
Betwixt th' encount'ring chiefs. In mutual wr
With fruitless efforts they attempt the fight.
So rage two bulls along th' opposing banks
Of some deep flood, which parts the fruitful me
Defiance thunders from their angry mouths



vain: in vain the furrow'd sod they rend;
de rolls the stream, and intercepts the w

ls by malignant fortune if a drop
moisture mingles with a burning mass
liquid metal, instant show'rs of death
ev'ry side th' exploding fluid spreads;
disappointment irritates the flame
fierce Platea's chief, whose vengeance bur
wide destruction. Embas, Daneus fall,
seus, Oebus, Mendes, Artias die;
l ten most hardy of th' immortal guard,
shivers breaking on the Grecian shield
eir gold-embellish'd weapons, raise a mound
r thy pale body, O in prime destroy'd,
Asia's garden once the fairest plant,
'n Teribazus! Thy distracted friend
n this thy temporary tomb is dragg'd
orceful zeal of satraps to the shore;
re then the brave Abrocomes arrang'd
succours new, by Abradates brought,
es and Mazæus. Turning swift,
omes inform'd his brother thus.

ng reinforcement from th' immortal guard.
es bold to Intaphernes leads,
ge to harrass by perpetual toil.
Grecians next the mountain. Thou unite
hy valour. Here the hostile ranks
le seem. Our joint impression try;
e weight of battle here impend.
typeranthes. Give regret to winds.
i not lost a friend this direful day?
ir private cares assist the Greeks
g already; or let sorrow set:
l revenge. These animating words
ranthes to the foremost line.
ul ardor leads. The battle joins.

Who stemm'd this tide of onset? Who imbru'd
His shining spear the first in Persian blood?
Eupalamus. Artembares he slew
With Derdas fierce, whom Caucasus had rear'd
On his tempestuous brow, the savage sons
Of violence and rapine. But their doom
Fires Hyperanthes, whose vindictive blade
Arrests the victor in his haughty course.
Beneath the strong Abrocomes o'erwhelm'd,
Melissus swells the number of the dead.
None could Mycenæ boast of prouder birth,
Than young Melissus, who in silver mail
The line embellish'd. He in Cirrha's mead,
Where high Parnassus from his double top
O'ershades the Pythian games, the envy'd prize
Of fame obtain'd. Low sinks his laurell'd head
In death's cold night; and horrid gore deforms
The graceful hair. Impatient to revenge
Aristobulus strides before the van.
A storm of fury darkens all his brow.
Around he rolls his gloomy eye. For death
Is Alyattes mark'd, of regal blood,
Deriv'd from Crœsus, once imperial lord
Of nations. Him the nymphs of Halys wept;
When, with delusive oracles beguil'd
By Delphi's god, he pass'd their fatal waves
A mighty empire to dissolve: nor knew
Th' ill-destin'd prince, that envious fortune watch'd
That direful moment from his hand to wrest
The sceptre of his fathers. In the shade
Of humble life his race on Tmolus' brow
Lay hid; till, rous'd to battle, on this field
Sinks Alyattes, and a royal breed
In him extinct forever. Lycis dies,
For boist'rous war ill-chosen. He was skill'd
To tune the lulling flute, and melt the heart,
Or with his pipe's awak'ning strain allure
The lovely dames of Lydia to the dance.
They on the verdant level graceful mov'd



In vary'd measures; while the cooling breeze
Beneath their swelling garments wanton'd o'er
Their snowy breasts, and smooth Cayster's stream,
Soft gliding, murmur'd by. The hostile blade
Draws forth his entrails. Prone he falls. Not long
The victor triumphs. From the prostrate corse
Of Lycis while insulting he extracts
The reeking weapon, Hyperanthes' steel
Invades his knee, and cuts the sinewy cords.
The Myceneans with uplifted shields,
Corinthians and Phliasians close around
The wounded chieftain. In redoubled rage
The contest glows. Abrocomes incites
Each noble Persian. Each his voice obeys.
Here Abradates, there Mazæus press,
Orontes and Hydarnes. None retire
From toil, or peril. Urg'd on ev'ry side,
Myenæ's band to fortune leave their chief.
Despairing, raging, destitute he stands,
Propt on his spear. His wound forbids retreat.
None, but his brother, Eumenes, abides
The dire extremity. His studded orb
Is held defensive. On his arm the sword
Of Hyperanthes rapidly descends.
Down drops the buckler, and the sever'd hand
Resigns its hold. The unprotected pair
By Asia's hero to the ground are swept;
As to a reaper crimson poppies low'r
Their heads luxuriant on the yellow plain.
From both their breasts the vital currents flow,
And mix their streams. Elate the Persians pour
Their numbers, deep'ning on the foe dismay'd.
The Greeks their station painfully maintain.
This Anaxander saw, whose faithless tongue
His colleague Leontiades bespake.

'The hour is come to serve our Persian friends.
Behold, the Greeks are press'd. Let Thebes retire,
A bloodless conquest yielding to the king.'

This said, he drew his Thebans from their post,
Not with unpunish'd treachery. The lance
Of Abradates gor'd their foul retreat;
Nor knew the Asian chief, that Asia's friends
Before him bled. Mean time, as mighty Jove,
Or he more ancient on the throne of heav'n;
When from the womb of Chaos dark the world
Emerg'd to birth, where'er he view'd the jar
Of atoms yet discordant and unform'd,
Confusion thence with pow'rful voice dispell'd,
'Till light and order universal reign'd;
So from the hill Leonidas survey'd
The various war. He saw the Theban rout;
That Corinth, Phlius and Mycense look'd
Affrighted backward. Instantly his charge
Is borne by Maron, whom obedience wings,
Precipitating down the sacred cave,
That Sparta's ranks, advancing, should repair
The disunited phalanx. Ere they move,
Dieneces inspires them. Fame, my friends,
Calls forth your valour in a signal hour.
For you this glorious crisis she reserv'd,
Laconia's splendour to assert. Young man,
Son of Megistias, follow He conducts
Th' experienc'd troop. They lock their shields and w
In dense arrangement, repossess the void,
Left by the faithless Thebans, and repulse
Th' exulting Persians. When with efforts vain
These oft renew'd the contest, and recoil'd,
As oft confounded with diminish'd ranks;
Lo! Hyperanthes blush'd, repeating late
The words of Artemisia. 'Learn, O chiefs,
The only means of glory and success.
Unlike the others, whom we newly chas'd,
These are a band, selected from the Greeks,
Perhaps the Spartans, whom we often hear
By Demaratus prais'd. To break their line
In vain we struggle, unarray'd and lax,

Depriv'd of union. Do not we preside
O'er Asia's armies, and our courage boast,
Our martial art above the vulgar herd?
Let us, ye chiefs, attempt in order'd ranks
To form a troop and emulate the foe.'

They wait not dubious. On the Malian shore
In gloomy depth a column soon is form'd
Of all the nobles, Abradates strong,
Orontes bold, Mazæus, and the might
Of brave Abrocomes with each, who bore
The highest honors, and excell'd in arms;
Themselves the lords of nations, who before
The throne of Xerxes tributary bow'd.
To these succeed a chosen number, drawn
From Asia's legions, vaunted most in fight;
Who from their king perpetual stipends share;
Who, station'd round the provinces, by force
His tyranny uphold. In ev'ry part
Is Hyperanthes active, ardent seen
Throughout the huge battalion. He adjusts
Their equal range, then cautious, lest on march
Their unaccustom'd order should relax,
Full in the center of the foremost rank
Orontes plants, committing to his hand
Th' imperial standard; whose expanded folds
Glow'd in the airy presenting to the sun
The richest dye of Tyre. The royal bird
Amid the gorgeous tincture shone express'd
In high embroider'd gold. The wary prince
On this conspicuous, leading sign of war
Commands each satrap, posted in the van,
To fix his eye regardful, to direct
By this alone his even pace and slow,
Retiring or advancing. So the star,
Chief of the spangles on that fancy'd bear,
Once an Idæan nymph, and nurse of Jove,
Bright Cynosura to the Boreal pole
Attracts the sailor's eye; when distance hides

The headland signals, and her guiding fly,
New-ris'n, she throws. The hero next appoints,
That ev'ry warrior through the length'ning files,
Observing none, but those before him plac'd,
Shall watch their motions, and their steps pursue.
Nor is th' important thicket next the pass
Forgot. Two thousand of th'-immortal guard
That station seize. His orders all perform'd,
Close by the standard he assumes his post.
Intrepid thence he animates his friends.

'Heroic chieftains, whose unconquer'd force
Rebellious Ægypt, and the Libyan felt,
Think, what the splendour of your former deeds
From you exacts. Remember, from the great
Illustrious actions are a debt to fame.
No middle path remains for them to tread,
Whom she hath once ennobled. Lo! this day
By trophies new will signalize your names,
Or in dishonor will forever cloud.'

He said, and vig'rous all to fight proceed.
As, when tempestuous Eurus stems the weight
Of western Neptune, struggling through the straits
Which bound Alcides' labours, here the storm
With rapid wing reverberates the tide;
There the contending surge with furrow'd tops
To mountains swells, and, whelming o'er the beach
On either coast, impells the hoary foam
On Mauritanian and Iberian strands.
Such is the dreadful onset. Persia keeps
Her foremost ranks unbroken, which are fill'd
By chosen warriors; while the num'rous croud,
Though still promiscuous pouring from behind,
Give weight and pressure to th' embattled chiefs,
Despising danger. Like the mural strength
Of some proud city, bulwark'd round and arm'd
With rising tow'rs to guard her wealthy stores,
Immovable, impenetrable stood



a's serry'd phalanx. In their face
ranny her threat'ning fetters shakes,
voe grinds insatiable his jaws.
is behind; entrusting to their swords
's, her freedom, and the sacred urns
r forefathers. Present now to thought
ltars rise, the mansions of their birth,
'er they honor, venerate and love.

it in the Persian van th' exalted lance
eranthes flam'd. Beside him preas'd
nes, Hydarnes, and the bulk
ndates terrible in war.
a Memphian pyramid, was seen
s; while Agis close in rank
enalippus, and the added strength
rtless Maron, their connected shields.
Each unrelax'd array maintains
fliet undecided; nor could Greece
ie adverse numbers, nor the weight
's band select remove the Greeks.

from Laconia's king, perceiving soon
xian's new arrangement, Medon flew,
is the staid Dieneces address'd.

das commands the Spartan ranks
ure back some paces. Soon, he deems,
xperienc'd foes in wild pursuit
ak their order.' Then the charge renew.

eard, the signal of retreat is giv'n.
rtans seem to yield. The Persians stop.
ment restrains them, and the doubt
pected victory. Their froth
es awakens. 'By the sun
before us. My victorious friends,
elay to enter Greece. Away,
intrepid. I already hear

Our horse, our chariots thund'ring on her plains.
I see her temples wrapt in Persian fires.'

He spake. In hurry'd violence they roll
Tumultuous forward. All in headlong pace
Disjoin their order, and the line dissolve.
This when the sage Dieneces descries,
The Spartans halt, returning to the charge
With sudden vigour. In a moment piere'd
By his resistless steel, Orontes falls
And quits the imperial banner. This the chief
In triumph waves. The spartans press the foe.
Close-wedg'd and square, in slow, progressive pace
O'er heaps of mangled carcases and arms
Invincible they tread. Composing flutes
Each thought, each motion harmonize. No rage
Untunes their souls. The phalanx yet more deep
Of Medon follows; while the lighter bands
Glide by the flanks, and reach the broken foe.
Amid their flight what vengeance from the arm
Of Alpheus falls? O'er all in swift pursuit
Was he renown'd. His active feet had match'd
The son of Peleus in the dusty course;
But now the wrongs, the long-remember'd wrongs
Of Polydorus animate his strength
With ten fold vigour. Like th' empurpled moon,
When in eclipse her silver disk hath lost
The wonted light, his buckler's polish'd face
Is now obscur'd; the figur'd bosses drop
In crimson, spouting from his deathful strokes.
As, when with horror wing'd, a whirlwind rends
A shatter'd navy; from the ocean cast,
Enormous fragments hide the level beach;
Such as dejected Persia late beheld
On Thessaly's unnavigable strand:
Thus o'er the champain satraps lay bestrewn
By Alpheus, persevering in pursuit
Beyond the pass. Not Phoebus could inflict
On Niobe more vengeance, when, incens'd



By her maternal arrogance, which scorn'd
Latona's race, he twang'd his ireful bow,
And one by one from youth and beauty hurl'd
Her sons to Pluto; ner severer pangs
That mother felt, than pierc'd the gen'rous soul
Of Hyperanthes, while his noblest friends
On ev'ry side lay gasping. With despair
He still contends. Th' immortals from their stand
Behind th' entangling thicket next the pass
His signal rouses. Ere they clear their way,
Well-caution'd Medon from the close defile
Two thousand Locrians pours. An aspect new
The fight assumes. Through implicated shrubs
Confusion waves each banner. Falchions, spears
And shields are all encumber'd; till the Greeks
Had forc'd a passage to the yielding foe.
Then Medon's arm is felt. The dreadful boar,
Wide-wasting once the Calydonian fields,
In fury breaking from his gloomy lair,
Rang'd with less havoc through unguarded folds,
Than Medon, sweeping down the glitt'ring files,
So vainly styl'd immortal. From the cliff
Divine Melissa, and Laconia's king
Enjoy the glories of Oileus' son.
Fierce Alpheus too returning from his chace,
Joins in the slaughter. Ev'ry Persian falls.

To him the Locrian chief. 'Brave Spartan, thanks.
Through thee my purpose is accomplish'd full.
My phalanx here with levell'd rows of spears
Shall guard the shatter'd bushes. Come what may
From Asia's camp, th' assailant, flank and driv'n
Down yonder slope, shall perish. Gods of Greece,
You shall behold your fanes profusely deck'd
In splendid offspring from barbarian spoils,
Won by your free-born supplicants this day.'

This said, he forms his ranks. Their threatning points
Gleam through the thicket, whence the shiv'ring foe

Avert their sight, like passengers dismay'd,
Who on their course by Nile's portentous banks
Descry in ambush on perfidious reeds
The crocodile's fell teeth. Contiguous lay
Thermopylæ. Dieneces secur'd
The narrow mouth. Two lines the Spartans shew'd,
One tow'rds the plain observ'd the Persian camp;
One, led by Agis, fac'd th' interior pass.

Not yet discourag'd, Hyperanthes strives
The scatter'd host to rally. He exhorts,
Entreats, at length indignant thus exclaims.

'Degen'rate Persians! to sepulchral dust
Could breath return, your fathers from the tomb
Would utter groans. Inglorious, do ye leave
Behind you Persia's standard to adorn
Some Grecian temple? Can your splended ears,
Voluptuous couches, and delicious boards,
Your gold, your gems, ye satraps, be preserv'd
By cowardice and flight? The eunuch slave
Will scorn such lords, your women loath your beds.'

Few hear him, fewer follow; while the fight
His unabating courage oft renews,
As oft repuls'd with danger: till, by all
Deserted mixing in the gen'ral rout,
He yields to fortune, and regains the camp.
In short advances thus the dying tide
Beats for awhile against the shelving strand,
Still by degrees retiring, and at last
Within the bosom of the main subsides.

Though Hyperanthes from the fight was driv'n
Close to the mountain, whose indented side
There gave the widen'd pass an ample space
For numbers to embattle, still his post
Bold Intaphernes underneath a cliff
Against the firm Platæan line maintain'd.



On him look'd down Leonidas like Death,
When, from his iron cavern call'd by Jove,
He stands gigantic on a mountain's head;
Whence he commands th' affrighted earth to quake,
And, crags and forests in his direful grasp
High-wielding, dashes on a town below,
Whose deeds of black impiety provoke
The long-enduring gods. Around the verge
Of Oeta, curving to a crescent's shape,
The marbles, timbers, fragments lay amass'd.
The Helots, peasants, mariners attend
In order nigh Leonidas. They watch
His look. He gives the signal. Rous'd at once
The force, the skill, activity and zeal
Of thousands are combin'd. Down rush the piles.
Trees, roll'd on trees, with mingled rock descend,
Uninterrnitted ruin. Loud resound
The hollow trunks against the mountain's side.
Swift bounds each craggy mass. The foes below
Look up aghast, in horror shrink and die.
Whole troops, o'erwhelm'd beneath th' enormous load,
Lie hid and lost, as never they had known
A name, or being. Intaphernes clad
In regal splendour, progeny of kings,
Who rul'd Damascus, and the Syrian palms,
Here slept forever. Thousands of his train
In that broad space the ruins had not reach'd.
Back to their camp a passage they attempt
Through Lacedæmon's line. Them Agis stopp'd.
Before his powerful arm Pandates fell,
Sosarmes, Tachos. Menalippus dy'd
His youthful steel in blood. The mightier spear
Of Maron pierc'd battalions, and enlarg'd
The track of slaughter. Backward turn'd the rout,
Nor found a milder fate. Th' unweary'd swords
Of Dithyrambus and Diomedon,
Who from the hill are wheeling on their flank,
Still flash tremendous. To the shore they fly,
At once envelop'd by successive bands

Of diff'rent Greeians. From the gulph profound
Perdition here inevitable frowns,
While there, encircled by a grove of spears,
They stand devoted hecatombs to Mars.
Now not a moment's interval delays
Their gen'ral doom; but down the Malian steep
Prone are they hurry'd to th' expanded arms
Of horror, rising from the oozy deep,
And grasping all their numbers, as they fall
The dire confusion like a storm invades
The chafing surge. Whole troops Bellona rolls
In one vast ruin from the craggy ridge.
O'er all their arms, their ensigns, deep-engulph'd,
With hideous roar the waves forever close.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Night coming on, the Grecians retire to their tents. guard is placed on the Phocian wall under the com mand of Agis. He admits into the camp a lady, a companied by a single slave, and conducts them t Leonidas; when she discovers herself to be Ariana sister of Xerxes and Hyperanthes, and sues for th body of Teribazus; which being found among th slain, she kills herself upon it. The slave, who atte ded her, proves to be Polydorus, brother to Alphe and Maron, and who had been formerly carried int captivity by a Phœnician pirate. He relate before an assembly of the chiefs a message from D narratus to the Spartans, which discloses the treach ry of the Thebans, and of Epialtes, the Malian, wh had undertaken to lead part of the Persian arm through a pass among the mountains of Oeta. Thi information throws the council into a great tumul which is pacified by Leonidas, who sends Alpheus t observe the motions of these Persians, and Dieneces with a party of Lacedæmonians to support the Ph cians, with whom the defence of these passages i the hills had been entrusted. In the mean time Agi sends the bodies of Teribazus and Ariana to the camp of Xerxes.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK IX.

In sable vesture, spangled o'er with stars,
The night assum'd her throne. Recall'd from war,
Their toil, protracted long, the Greeks forget,
Dissolv'd in silent slumber, all, but those,
Who watch th' uncertain perils of the dark;
A hundred warriors. Agis was their chief.
High on the wall, intent the hero sat.
Fresh winds across the undulating bay
From Asia's host the various din convey'd
In one deep murmur, swelling on his ear.
When by the sound of footsteps down the pass
Alarm'd he calls aloud. 'What feet are these,
Which beat the echoing pavement of the rock?
Reply, nor tempt inevitable fate.'

A voice reply'd. 'No enemies we come,
But crave admittance in an humble tone.'

The Spartan answers. 'Through the midnight shade
What purpose draws your wand'ring steps abroad?'

To whom the stranger. 'We are friends to Greece;
Through thy assistance we implore access
To Lacedæmon's king.' The cautious Greek
Still hesitates, when musically sweet
A tender voice his wond'ring ear allures.

'O gen'rous warrior, listen to the pray'r
Of one distress'd, whom grief alone hath led
Through midnight shades to these victorious tents;
A wretched woman, innocent of fraud,'

The chief, descending, through th' unfolded gate
Upheld a flaming torch. The light disclos'd
One first in servile garments. Near his side
A woman graceful and majestic stood,
Not with an aspect rivalling the pow'r
Of fatal Helen, or th' insnaring charms
Of love's soft queen, but such, as far surpass'd,
Whate'er the lilly blending with the rose,
Spreads on the cheek of beauty soon to fade;
Such, as express'd a mind, by wisdom rul'd,
By sweetness temper'd; virtue's purest light
Illumining the countenance divine:
Yet could not soften rig'rous fate, nor charm
Malignant fortune to revere the good;
Which oft with anguish rends a spotless heart,
And oft associates wisdom with despair.
In courteous phrase began the chief humane.

'Exalted fair, whose form adorns the night,
Forbear to blame the vigilance of war.
My slow compliance to the rigid laws
Of Mars impute. In me no longer pause
Shall from the presence of our king withhold
This thy apparent dignity and worth.'

Here ending, he conducts her. At the call
Of his lov'd brother from his couch arose
Leonidas. In wonder he survey'd
Th' illustrious virgin, whom his presence aw'd.
Her eye submissive to the ground declin'd
In veneration of the godlike man.
His mien, his voice her anxious dread dispel,
Benevolent and hospitable thus.

'Thy looks, fair stranger, amiable and great,
A mind delineate, which, from all, commands
Supreme regard. Relate, thou noble dame,
By what relentless destiny compell'd,
Thy tender feet the paths of darkness tread;
Rehearse th' afflictions, whence thy virtue mourns



On her wan cheek a sudden blush arose
Like day, first dawning on the twilight pale;
When, wrapt in grief, these words a passage found.

'If to be most unhappy, and to know,
That hope is irrecoverably fled;
If to be great and wretched may deserve
Commiseration from the brave: behold,
Thou glorious leader of unconquer'd bands,
Behold, descended from Darius' loins,
Th' afflicted Ariana; and my pray'r
Accept with pity, nor my tears disdain.
First, that I lov'd the best of human race,
Heroic, wise, adorn'd by ev'ry art,
Of shame unconscious doth my heart reveal.
This day, in Grecian arms conspicuous clad,
He fought, he fell. A passion, long conceal'd,
For me alas! within my brother's arms
His dying breath resigning, he disclos'd.
Oh! I will stay my sorrows! will forbid
My eyes to stream before thee, and my breast,
O'erwhelm'd by anguish, will from sighs restrain!
For why should thy humanity be griev'd
At my distress, why learn from me to mourn
The lot of mortals, doom'd to pain and woe.
Hear then, O king, and grant my sole request,
To seek his body in the heaps of slain.'

Thus to the hero su'd the royal maid,
Resembling Ceres in majestic woe,
When supplicating Jove, from Stygian gloom,
And Pluto's black embraces, to redeem
Her lov'd and lost Proserpina. Awhile
On Ariana fixing steadfast eyes,
These tender thoughts Leonidas recall'd.

'Such are thy sorrows, O forever dear,
Who now at Lacedæmon dost deplore
My everlasting absence.' Then aside

These bleeding reliques bear to Persia's king,
Thou with four captives, whom I free from bonds.

'Art thou a Spartan, interrupts the slave?
Dost thou command me to return, and pine
In climes unbless'd by liberty, or laws?
Grant me to see Leonidas. Alone
Let him decide, if wretched, as I seem,
I may not claim protection from this camp.'

'Whoe'er thou art,' rejoins the chief, amaz'd,
But not offended, 'thy ignoble garb
Conceal'd a spirit, which I now revere.
Thy countenance demands a better lot,
Than I, a stranger to thy hidden worth,
Unconscious offer'd. Freedom dwells in Greece,
Humanity and justice. Thou shalt see
Leonidas their guardian.' To the king
He leads him straight, presents him in these words.

'In mind superior to the base attire,
Which marks his limbs with shame, a stranger com
Who thy protection claims.' The slave subjoins.

'I stand thy suppliant now. Thou soon shalt le
If I deserve thy favor. I request
To meet th' assembled chieftians of this host.
Oh! I am fraught with tidings, which import
The weal of ev'ry Grecian. Agis swift,
Appointed by Leonidas, convenes
The diff'rent leaders. To the tent they speed.
Before them call'd, the stranger thus began.

'O Alpheus! Maron! Hither turn your sight,
And know your brother.' From their seats they st
From either breaks in ecstacy the name
Of Polydorus. To his dear embrace
Each fondly strives to rush; but he withstands:
While down his cheek a flood of anguish pours



iis dejected eyes, in torture bent
t vile garb, dishonoring his form.
;th these accents, intermix'd with groans,
age found, while mute attention gaz'd.

i first should know, if this unhappy slave
rits your embraces.' Then approach'd
as. Before him all recede.
lpheus 'self, and yields his brother's hand,
in his own the regal hero press'd.
olydorus on his gloomy front
nance stern to consolation bore;
thus the king with majesty benign.

ev'ry heart is open to thy worth.
ous fortune, and enfeebling time
ritude and grief severely try
al spirit. Try'd, but not subdu'd,
u appear. Whatever be our lot
'n's appointment. Patience best becomes
tizen and soldier. Let the sight
nds and brethren dissipate thy gloom.'

ien the gentlest, Agis too advanc'd,
ith increas'd humanity began.

w in thy native liberty secure,
on thy past affliction, and relate,
:hance restores thy merit to the arms
nds and kindred.' Polydorus then—

as a Spartan. When my tender prime
hood border'd, from Laconia's shores
d by Phœnician pirates, I was sold
:, by Hyperanthes bought and giv'n
ana. Gracious was her hand.
emain'd a bondman, still estrang'd
Lacedæmon. Demaratus oft
ndly sorrow would my lot deplore,



Nor less his own ill-fated virtue mourn'd,
Lost to his country in a servile court,
The centre of corruption; where in smiles
Are painted envy, treachery and hate,
With rankling malice; where alone sincere
The dissolute seek no disguise: where those,
Possessing all, a monarch can bestow,
Are far less happy, than the meanest heir
To freedom, far more groveling, than the slave,
Who serves their cruel pride. Yet here the sun
Ten times his yearly circle hath renew'd,
Since Polydorus hath in bondage groan'd.
My bloom is pass'd, or, pining in despair,
Untimely wither'd. I at last return
A messenger of fate, who tidings bear
Of desolation.' Here he paus'd in grief
Redoubled; when Leonidas. 'Proceed.
Should from thy lips inevitable death
To all be threaten'd, thou art heard by none
Whose dauntless hearts can entertain a thought
But how to fall the noblest.' Thus the king.
The rest in speechless expectation wait.
Such was the solemn silence, which o'erspread
The shrine of Ammon, or Dodona's shades,
When anxious mortals from the mouth of Jove
Their doom explor'd. Nor Polydorus long
Suspends the counsel, but resumes his tale.

'As I this night accompany'd the steps
Of Ariana, near the pass we saw
A restless form, now traversing the way,
Now, as a statue, rivetted by doubt,
Then on a sudden starting to renew
An eager pace. As nearer we approach'd,
He by the moon, which glimmer'd on our heads,
Descry'd us. Straight advancing, whither bent
Our midnight course, he ask'd. I knew the voice
Of Demaratus. To my breast I clasp'd
The venerable exile, and reply'd.

Laconia's camp we seek. Demand no more.
Farewell. He wept. Be heav'n thy guide, he said,
Thrice happy Polydorus. Thou again
May'st visit Sparta, to these eyes deny'd.
Soon as arriv'd at those triumphant tents,
Say to the Spartans from their exil'd king,
Although their blind credulity deprived
The wretched Demaratus of his home;
From ev'ry joy secluded, from his wife,
His offspring torn, his countrymen and friends,
Him from his virtue they could ne'er divide.
Say, that ev'n here, where all are kings, or slaves,
Amid the riot of flagitious courts
Not quite extinct his Spartan spirit glows,
Though grief hath dimm'd its fires. Rememb'ring this,
Report, that newly to the Persian host
Return'd a Malian, Epialtes nam'd,
Who, as a spy, the Grecian tents had sought.
He to the monarch magnify'd his art,
Which by delusive eloquence had wrought.
The Greeks to such despair; that ev'ry hand
To Persia's sov'reign standard would have bow'd;
Had not the spirit of a single chief,
By fear unconquer'd, and on death resolv'd,
Restor'd their valor: therefore would the king
Trust to his guidance a selected force,
They soon shall pierce th' unguarded bounds of Greece
Through a neglected aperture above,
Where no Leonidas should bar their way.
Meantime by him the treach'rous Thebans sent
Assurance of their aid. Th' assenting prince
At once decreed two myriads to advance
With Hyperanthes. Ev'ry lord besides,
Whom youth, or courage, or ambition warms,
Rous'd by the traitor's eloquence. attend
From all the nations with a rival zeal
To enter Greece the foremost.' In a sigh
He clos'd—like me. Tremendous from his seat
Up rose Diomedon. His eyes were flames.

When swift on trembling Anaxander broke
These ireful accents from his livid lips.

'Yet ere we fall, O traitor, shall this arm
To hell's avenging furies sink thy head.'

All now is tumult. Ev'ry bosom swells
With wrath untam'd and vengeance. Half unsheath
Th' impetuous falchion of Platæa flames.
But, as the Colchian sorceress, renown'd
In legends old, or Circe, when they fram'd
A potent spell, so smoothness charm'd the main,
And lull'd Æolian rage by mystic song;
Till not a billow heav'd against the shore,
Nor ev'n the wanton-winged zephyr breath'd
The lightest whisper through the magic air:
So, when thy voice, Leonidas, is heard,
Confusion listens; ire in silent awe
Subsides. 'Withhold this rashness,' cries the king.
'To proof of guilt let punishment succeed.
Not yet Barbarian shouts our camp alarm.
We still have time for vengeance, time to know,
If menac'd ruin we may yet repel,
Or how most glorious perish.' Next arose
Dioneces, and thus th' experienc'd man.

'Ere they surmount our fences, Xerxes' troops
Must learn to conquer, and the Greeks to fly.
The spears of Phocis guard that secret pass.
To them let instant messengers depart,
And note the hostile progress.' Alpheus here.

'Leonidas, behold, my willing feet
Shall to the Phocians bear thy high commands;
Shall climb the hill to watch th' approaching foe.'

'Thou active son of valour,' quick returns
The chief of Lacedæmon, 'in my thoughts
For ever present, when the public weal



quires the swift, the vigilant and bold.
, climb, surmount the rock's aerial height.
serve the hostile march. A Spartan band,
eneces, provide. Thyself conduct
eir speedy succour to our Phocian friends.'

The council rises. For this course prepar'd,
hile day, declining, prompts his eager feet,
Polydorus,' Alpheus thus in haste,
ng lost. and late recover'd, we must part
ain, perhaps for ever. Thou return
kiss the sacred soil, which gave thee birth,
d calls thee back to freedom. Brother dear,
hould have sighs to give thee—but farewell.
r country chides me, loit'ring in thy arms.'

This said, he darts along, nor looks behind,
hen Polydorus answers. 'Alpheus, no.
ave the marks of bondage to erase.
y blood must wash the shameful stain away.'

We have a father,' Maron interpos'd.
hy unexpected presence will revive
s heavy age, now childless and forlorn.'

To him the brother with a gloomy frown.
l should I comfort others. View these eyes.
int is their light; and vanish'd was my bloom
fore its hour of ripeness. In my breast
ief will retain a mansion, nor by time
dispossess'd. Unceasing shall my soul
ood o'er the black remembrance of my youth,
slavery exhausted. Life to me
ith lost its savour.' Then in sullen woe
is head declines. His brother pleads in vain.

Now in his view Dieneces appear'd
ith Sparta's band. Immoveable his eyes
them he fix'd, revolving these dark thoughts.

'I too like them from Lacedæmon spring,
Like them instructed once to poise the spear,
To lift the pond'rous shield. Ill destin'd wretch!
Thy arm is grown enervate, and would sink
Beneath a buckler's weight. Malignant fates!
Who have compell'd my free born hand to change
The warrior's arms for ignominious bonds;
Would you compensate for my chains, my shame,
My ten years anguish, and the fell despair,
Which on my youth have prey'd; relenting once,
Grant, I may bear my buckler to the field,
And, known a Spartan, seek the shades below.'

'Why to be known a Spartan must thou seek
The shades below?' Impatient Maron spake,
'Live, and be known a Spartan by thy deeds.
Live, and enjoy thy dignity of birth.
Live and perform the duties, which become
A citizen of Sparta. Still thy brow
Frowns gloomy, still unyielding. He, who leads
Our band, all fathers of a noble race,
Will ne'er permit thy barren day to close
Without an offspring to uphold the state.'

'He will, replies the brother in a glow,
Prevailing o'er the paleness of his cheek,
He will permit me to compleat by death
The measure of my duty; will permit
Me to achieve a service, which no hand
But mine can render, to adorn his fall
With double lustre, strike the barb'rous foe
With endless terror, and avenge the shame
Of an enslaved Laconian.' Closing here
His words mysterious, quick he turn'd away
To find the tent of Agis. There his hand
In grateful sorrow minister'd her aid;
While the humane, the hospitable care
Of Agis gently by her lover's corse
On one sad bier the pallid beauties laid



Of Ariana. He from bondage freed
Four eastern captives, whom his gen'rous arm
That day had spar'd in battle; then began
This solemn charge. 'You Persians, whom my sword
Acquir'd in war, unransom'd, shall depart.
To you I render freedom, which you sought
To wrest from me. One recompence I ask,
And one alone. Transport to Asia's camp
This bleeding princess. Bid the Persian king
Weep o'er this flow'r, untimely cut in bloom.
Then say, th' all-judging pow'rs have thus ordain'd,
Thou, whose ambition o'er the groaning earth
Leads desolation; o'er the nations spreads
Calamity and tears; thou first shalt mourn,
And through thy house destruction first shall range.'

Dismiss'd, they gain the rampart, where on guard
Was Dithyrambus posted. He perceiv'd
The mournful bier approach. To him the fate
Of Ariana was already told.
He met the captives, with a moisten'd eye,
Full bent on Terizabus, sigh'd and spake.

'O that, assuming with those Grecian arms
A Grecian spirit, thou in scorn hadst look'd
On princes! Worth like thine, from slavish courts
Withdrawn, had ne'er been wasted to support
A king's injustice. Then a gentler lot
Had bless'd thy life, or, dying, thou hadst known,
How sweet is death for liberty. A Greek
Affords these friendly wishes, though his head
Had lost their honors, gather'd from thy fall,
When fortune favor'd, or propitious Jove
Smil'd on the better cause. Ill fated pair,
Whom in compassion's purest dew I lave,
But that my hand infix'd the deathful wound,
And must be grievous to your loathing shades,
From all the neighb'ring valleys would I cull
Their fairest growth to strew your hearse with flow'rs.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK X.

lissa in the temple, and receives fro
intelligence, that the Persians were i
sion of the upper Straits, which had be
by the Phocians. Melibœus brings h
her father's death. She strictly enjoi
to preserve his life by a timely retre
mends the enforcement of her advice t
and zeal of Melibœus. In the morni
of Teribazus and Ariana are brought
sence of Xerxes, soon after a report ha
camp, that great part of his navy wa
The Persian monarch, quite dispirited
by Argestes to send an ambassador to
king. Argestes himself is deputed,
vealing his embassy in secret to Leoni
led before the whole army, and there re
swer. Alpheus returns, and declares th
was master of the passages in the hills,
rive at Thermopylæ the next morning
Leonidas offers to send away all the t
his three hundred Spartans; but Dior
philus, Dithyrambus and Megistias refu
then to relieve the perplexity of Medon



LEONIDAS.

BOOK X.

THE Grecian leaders, from the council ris'n,
Among the troops dispersing, by their words,
Their looks undaunted, warm the coldest heart
Against new dangers threat'ning. To his tent
The Locrian captains Medon swift convenes,
Exhorting thus. 'O long approv'd my friends,
You, who have seen my father in the field
Triumphant, bold assistants of my arm
In labors not inglorious, who this day
Have rais'd fresh trophies, be prepar'd. If help
Be further wanted in the Phocian camp,
You will the next be summon'd. Locris lies
To ravage first expos'd. Your ancient fane,
Your goddesses, your priestess half ador'd,
The daughter of Oileus, from your swords
Protection claim against an impious foe.

All anxious for Melissa, he dismiss'd
Th' applauding vet'rans; to the sacred cave
Then hasten'd. Under heav'n's night-shaded cope
He mused. Melissa in her holy place
How to approach with inauspicious steps,
How to accost his pensive mind revolv'd;
When Mycon, pious vassal of the fane
Descending through the cavern, at the sight
Of Medon stopp'd, and thus. 'Thy presence, lord,
The priestess calls. To Lacedæmon's king
I bear a message, suff'ring no delay.



He quits the chief, whose rapid feet ascend,
Soon ent'ring, where the pedestal displays
Thy form, Calliope sublime. The lyre,
Whose accents immortality confer,
Thy fingers seem to wake. On either side,
The snowy gloss of Parian marble shews
Four of thy sisters through surrounding shade.
Before each image is a virgin plac'd.
Before each virgin dimly burns a lamp,
Whose livid spires just temper with a gleam
The dread obscurity of night. Apart
The priestess thoughtful sits. Thus Medon breaks
The solemn silence. 'Anxious for thy fate
Without a summons to thy pure abode
I was approaching. Deities, who know
The present, pass'd and future, let my lips,
Unblam'd, have utt'rance. Thou, my sister, hear.
Thy breast let wisdom strengthen. Impious foes
Through Oeta now are passing.'—She replies.

'Are passing, brother! They alas! are pass'd,
Are in possession of the upper Streight.
Hear in thy turn. A dire narration hear.
A favor'd goat, conductor of my herd,
Stray'd to a dale, whose outlet is the post
To Phocians left, and penetrates to Greece.
Him Myeon following, by a hostile band,
Light arm'd, forerunners of a num'rous host,
Was seiz'd. By fear of menac'd torments fore'd,
He shew'd a passage up that mountain's side,
Whose length of wood o'ershades the Phocian land.
To dry and sapless trunks in diff'rent parts
Fire, by the Persians artfully apply'd,
Soon grew to flames. This done, the troop return'd,
Detaining Myeon. Now the mountain blaz'd.
The Phocians, ill-commanded, left their post,
Alarm'd, confus'd. More distant ground they chose.
In blind delusion forming there, they spread
Their ineffectual banners to repel



d'd peril from those fraudful lights,
ntagem prepar'd. A real foe
ime secur'd the undefended pass.
fycon saw. Escaping thence to me,
my orders hastens to inform
las.' She paus'd. Like one, who sees
rked light'ning into shivers rive
ted oak, or crumble tow'rs to dust,
t was Medon; then, recov'ring, spake.

ou boasted glory of th' Oilean house,
thy brother bow'd in rev'rence due
y superior virtues, let his voice
w regarded. From th' endanger'd fane,
ter, fly. Whatever be my lot,
p select of Locrians shall transport
acred person, where thy will ordains.'

ink not of me,' returns the dame. 'To Greece
: thy zeal. My peasants are conven'd,
by their labour, when the fatal hour
ires, with massy fragments I may bar
cave to human entrance. Best belov'd
thers, now a serious ear incline.
le in Greece to fortune's wanton gale
olden banner shall the Persian king,
led, wave. Leonidas, by death
rving Sparta. will his spirit leave
ast the glitt'ring pageant. Medon, live
are that glory. Thee to perish here
w, no oracle enjoins. To die,
ll'd, is blameful. Let thy pious hand
e Oileus from barbarian force.
parta mindful of her noble host
ist his rev'rend head. Th' assembled hinds,
hs, maidens, wives with nurselings at their breasts.
nd her now in consternation stood,
women weeping, mute, aghast the men.
em she turns. You never, faithful race,

Your priestess shall forsake. Melissa here,
Despairing never of the public weal,
For better days in solitude shall wait,
Shall cheer your sadness. My prophetic soul
Sees through time's cloud the liberty of Greece
More stable, more effulgent. In his blood
Leonidas cements th' unshaken base
Of that strong tow'r, which Athens shall exalt
To cast a shadow o'er the eastern world.'

This utter'd, tow'rd the temple's inmost seat
Of sanctity her solemn step she bends,
Devout, enraptur'd. In their dark'ning lamps
The pallid flames are fainting. Dim through mists
The morning peeps. An awful silence reigns.
While Medon pensive from the fane descends,
But instant reappears. Behind him close
Treads Melibœus, through the cavern's mouth
Ascending pale in aspect, not unlike
What legends tell of spectres, by the force
Of necromantic sorcery constrain'd;
Through earths dark bowels, which the spell disjoin'd,
They from death's mansion in reluctant sloth
Rose to divulge the secrets of their graves,
Or mysteries of fate. His cheerful brow,
O'erclouded, paleness on his healthful cheek,
A dull, unwonted heaviness of pace
Portend disast'rous tidings. Medon spake—

'Turn, holy sister. By the gods belov'd,
May they sustain thee in this mournful hour.
Our father, good Oileus is no more.
Rehearse thy tidings, swain.' He takes the word.

'Thou wast not present, when his mind, outstretch'd
By zeal for Greece, transported by his joy
To entertain Leonidas, refus'd
Due rest. Old age his ardour had forgot,
To his last waking moment with his guest



In rapt'rous talk redundant. He at last,
Compos'd and smiling in th' embrace of sleep,
To Pan's protection at the island fane
Was left. He wak'd no more. The fatal news,
To you discover'd, from the chiefs I hide.'

Melissa heard, inclin'd her forehead low
Before th' insculptur'd deities. A sigh
Broke from her heart, these accents from her lips—

'He full of days and honors through the gate
Of painless slumber is retir'd. His tomb
Shall stand among his fathers in the shade
Of his own trophies. Placid were his days,
Which flow'd through blessings. As a river pure,
Whose sides are flow'ry, and whose meadows fair,
Meets in his course a subterranean void;
There dips his silver head, again to rise,
And, rising, glide through flow'rs and meadows new;
So shall Oileus in those happier fields,
Where never tempests roar, nor humid clouds
In mists dissolve, nor white-descending flakes
Of winter violate th' eternal green;
Where never gloom of trouble shades the mind,
Nor gust of passion heaves the quiet breast,
Nor dews of grief are sprinkled. Thou art gone,
Host of divine Leonidas on earth,
Art gone before him to prepare the feast,
Immortalizing virtue.' Silent here,
Around her head she wraps her hallow'd pall.
Her prudent virgins interpose a hymn,
Not in a plaintive, but majestic flow,
To which their fingers, sweeping o'er the chords,
The lyre's full tone attemper. She unveils,
Then with a voice, a countenance compos'd—

'Go, Medon, pillar of th' Oilean house.
New cares, new duties claim thy precious life.
Perform the pious obsequies. Let tears,

Let groans be absent from the sacred dust,
Which heav'n in life so favor'd, more in death.
A term of righteous days, an envy'd urn
Like his, for Medon is Melissa's pray'r.
Thou, Melibœus, cordial, high in rank
Among the prudent, warn and watch thy lord:
My benediction shall reward thy zeal.'

Sooth'd by the blessings of such perfect lips,
They both depart. And now the climbing sun
To Xerxes' tent discover'd from afar
The Persian captives with their mournful load.
Before them rumour through her sable trump
Breathes lamentation. Horror lends his voice
To spread the tidings of disastrous fate
Along Spercheos. As a vapour black,
Which, from the distant, horizontal verge
Ascending, nearer still and nearer bends
To higher lands its progress, there condens'd,
Throws darkness o'er the valleys, while the face
Of nature saddens round; so step by step,
In motion slow th' advancing bier diffus'd
A solemn sadness o'er the camp. A hedge
Of trembling spears on either hand is form'd.
Tears underneath his iron-pointed cone
The Sacian drops. The Caspian savage feels
His heart transpierc'd, and wonders at the pain.
In Xerxes' presence are the bodies plac'd,
Nor he forbids. His agitated breast
All night had weigh'd against his future hopes
His present losses his defeated ranks,
By myriads thinn'd, their multitude abash'd,
His fleet thrice worsted, torn by storms, reduc'd
To half its number. When he slept in dreams
He saw the haggard dead, which floated round
Th' adjoining strands. Disasters new their ghosts
In sullen frowns, in shrill upbraidings bode.
Thus, ere the gory bier approach'd his eyes,
He in dejection had already lost

His kingly pride, the parent of disdain,
And cold indifference to human woes.
Not ev'n beside his sister's nobler corse
Her humble lover could awake his scorn.
The captives told their piercing tale. He heard;
He felt awhile compassion. But ere long
Those traces vanish'd from the tyrant's breast.
His former gloom redoubles. For himself
His anxious bosom heaves, oppress'd by fear,
Lest he with all his splendour should be cast
A prey to fortune. Thoughtful near the throne
Laconia's exile waits, to whom the king—

'O Demaratus, what will fate ordain!
Lo! fortune turns against me. What shall check
Her further malice, when her daring stride
Invades my house with ravage, and profanes
The blood of great Darius. I have sent
From my unguarded side the chosen band,
My bravest chiefs to pass the desert hill;
Have to the conduct of a Malian spy
My hopes entrusted. May not there the Greeks
In opposition more tremendous still,
More ruinous, than yester sun beheld,
Maintain their post invincible, renew
Their stony thunder in augmented rage,
And send whole quarries down the craggy steeps
Again to crush my army? Oh! unfold
Thy secret thoughts, nor hide the harshest truth.
Say, what remains to hope? The exile here—

'Too well, O monarch, do thy fears presage,
What may befall thy army. If the Greeks,
Arrang'd within Thermopylæ, a pass
Accessible and practic'd, could repel
With such destruction their unnumber'd foes;
What scenes of havoc may untrodden paths,
Confin'd among the craggy hills, afford?'

Lost in despair, the monarch silent sat.
Not less unmann'd, than Xerxes, from his place
Uprose Argestes; but concealing fear,
These artful words deliver'd—'If the king
Propitious wills to spare his faithful bands,
Nor spread at large the terrors of his pow'r;
More gentle means of conquest, than by arms,
Nor less secure may artifice supply.
Renown'd Darius, thy immortal sire
Bright in the spoil of kingdoms, long in vain
The fields of proud Euphrates with his host
O'erspread. At length, confiding in the wiles
Of Zopyrus, the mighty prince subdu'd
The Babylonian ramparts. Who shall count
The thrones and states, by stratagem o'erturn'd?
But if corruption join her pow'rful aid,
Not one can stand. What race of men possess
That probity, that wisdom, which the veil
Of craft shall never blind, nor proffer'd wealth,
Nor splendid pow'r seduce? O Xerxes, born
To more, than mortal greatness, canst thou find
Through thy unbounded sway no dazzling gift,
Which may allure Leonidas? Dispel
The cloud of sadness from those sacred eyes.
Great monarch, proffer to Laconia's chief,
What may thy own magnificence declare,
And win his friendship. O'er his native Greece
Invest him sov'reign. Thus procure his sword
For thy succeeding conquests. Xerxes here,
As from a trance awak'ning, swift replies.

'Wise are thy dictates. Fly to Sparta's chief.
Argestes, fall before him. Bid him join
My arms, and reign o'er ev'ry Grecian state.'

He scarce had finish'd, when in haste approach
Artuchus. Startled at the ghastly stage
Of death, that guardian of the Persian fair
Thus in a groan.—'Thou deity malign,



O Arimanius, what a bitter draught
For my sad lips thy cruelty hath mix'd!
Is this the flow'r of woman, to my charge
So lately giv'n? Oh! princess, I have rang'd
The whole Sperchean valley, woods and caves,
In quest of thee, found here a lifeless corse.
Astonishment and horror lock my tongue.'

Pride now, reviving in the monarch's breast,
Dispell'd his black despondency awhile,
With gall more black effacing from his heart
Each merciful impression. Stern he spake.—

'Remove her, satrap, to the female train.
Let them the due solemnities perform.
But never she, by Mithra's light I swear,
Shall sleep in Susa with her kindred dust;
Who by ignoble passions hath debas'd
The blood of Xerxes. Greece beheld her shame;
Let Greece behold her tomb. The low-born slave,
Who dar'd to Xerxes' sister lift his hopes,
On some bare crag expose.' The Spartan here—

'My royal patron, let me speak—and die,
If such thy will. This cold, disfigur'd clay
Was late thy soldier, gallantly who fought,
Who nobly periah'd, long the dearest friend
Of Hyperanthes, hazarding his life
Now in thy cause. O'er Persians thou dost reign;
None more, than Persians, venerate the brave.'

'Well hath he spoke,' Artuchus firm subjoins.
'But if the king his rigour will inflict
On this dead warrior—Heav'n, o'erlook the deed,
Nor on our heads accumulate fresh woes!
The shatter'd fleet, th' intimidated camp,
The band select, through Oeta's dang'rous wilds
At this dread crisis struggling, must obtain
Support from heav'n, or Asia's glory fails.'

Argestes, parted from his master's s
Ascends a car; and, speeding o'er the
Sees Artemisia. She the ashes pale
Of slaughter'd Carians, on the pyre c
Was then collecting for the funeral v
In exclamation thus. 'My subjects, l
On earth, descend to happier climes h
The fawning, dastard counsellors, wh
Your worth deserted in the hour of n
May kites disfigure, may the wolf dev
Shade of my husband, thou salute in
These gallant warriors, faithful once
Nor less to me. They tidings will rep
Of Artemisia to revive thy love—
May wretches like Argestes never clas
Their wives, their offspring! Never gr
May their unbury'd limbs dismiss thei
To wail for ever on the banks of Styx!'

Then, turning tow'rd her son. 'Com
Let us transport these reliques of our f
To yon tall bark, in pendent sable clad
They, if her keel be destin'd to return,
Shall in paternal monuments ...

Will ever triumph. Yet my soul enjoys
Her own presage, that destiny reserves
An hour for my revenge.' Concluding here,
She gains the fleet. Argestes sweeps along
On rapid wheels from Artemisia's view,
Like Night, protectress foul of heinous deeds,
With treason, rape and murder at her heel,
Before the eye of morn retreating swift
To hide her loathsome visage. Soon he reach'd
Thermopylæ; descending from his car,
Was led by Dithyrambus to the tent
Of Sparta's ruler. Since the fatal news
By Myeon late deliver'd, he apart
With Polydorus had consulted long
On high attempts; and, now sequester'd, sat
To ruminate on vengeance. At his feet
Prone fell the satrap, and began. 'The will
Of Xerxes bends me prostrate to the earth
Before thy presence. Great and matchless chief,
Thus says the lord of Asia. Join my arms;
Thy recompense is Greece. Her fruitful plains,
Her gen'rous steeds, her flocks, her num'rous towns,
Her sons I render to thy sov'reign hand.
And, O illustrious warrior heed my words.
Think on the bliss of royalty, the pomp
Of courts, their endless pleasures, trains of slaves,
Who restless watch for thee, and thy delights:
Think on the glories of unrivall'd sway.
Look on th' Ionic, on th' Æolian Greeks.
From them their phantom liberty is flown;
While in each province, rais'd by Xerxes' pow'r,
Some favor'd chief presides; exalted state,
Prefer giv'n by envious freedom. On his head
He bears the gorgeous diadem; he sees
His equals once in adoration stoop
Beath his footstool. What superior beams
Fall from thy temples blaze, when gen'ral Greece,
Noblest states abounding, calls thee lord,
The only worthy. How will each rejoice

Around thy throne, and hail th' auspicious day;
When thou, distinguish'd by the Persian king,
Didst in thy sway consenting nations bless,
Didst calm the fury of unsparing war,
Which else had delug'd all with blood and flames.'

Leonidas replies not, but commands
The Thespian youth, still watchful near the tent,
To summon all the Grecians. He obeys.
The king uprises from his seat, and bids
The Persian follow. He, amaz'd, attends,
Surrounded soon by each assembling band;
When thus at length the godlike Spartan spake.

'Here, Persian, tell thy embassy. Repeat,
That to obtain my friendship Asia's prince
To me hath proffer'd sov'reignty o'er Greece.
Then view these bands whose valour shall preserve
That Greece unconquer'd, which your king bestows
Shall strew your bodies on her crimson'd plains:
The indignation, painted on their looks,
Their gen'rous scorn may answer for their chief.
Yet from Leonidas, thou wretch, inur'd
To vassalage and baseness, hear. The pomp,
The arts of pleasure in despotic courts
I spurn abhorrent. In a spotless heart
I look for pleasure. I from righteous deeds
Derive my splendour. No adoring croud,
No purpled slaves, no mercenary spears
My state embarrass. I in Sparta rule
By laws my rulers; with a guard unknown
To Xerxes, public confidence and love.
No pale suspicion of th' empoison'd bowl,
Th' assassin's poniard, or provok'd revolt
Chace from my decent couch the peace, deny'd
To his resplendent canopy. Thy king,
Who hath profan'd by proffer'd bribes my ear,
Dares not to meet my arm. Thee, trembling slave,
Whose embassy was treason, I despise,
And therefore spare.' Dismissed with shame

'Our marble temples these barbarians waste,
Crime less impious, than a bare attempt
Of sacrilege on virtue. Grant my suit,
Thou living temple, where the goddess dwells:
To me consign the caitiff. Soon the winds
Shall parch his limbs on Oeta's tallest pine.'

Amidst his fury suddenly return'd
The speed of Alpheus. All, suspended, fix'd
On him their eyes, impatient. He began

'I am return'd a messenger of ill.
Close to the passage, op'ning into Greece,
That post committed to the Phocian guard,
Perhaps a bushy cliff. A station there
Behind the shrubs by dead of night I took,
Though not in darkness. Purple was the face
Of heav'n. Beneath my feet the valleys glow'd.
A range immense of wood-invested hills,
The boundaries of Greece, were clad in flames;
In act of froward chance, or crafty foes
To cast dismay. The crackling pines I heard;
Their branches sparkled, and the thickets blaz'd.
On hillocks embers rose. Embody'd fire,
As from unnumber'd furnaces, I saw
Mount high through vacant trunks of headless oaks,
Broad bas'd, and dry with age. Barbarian helms,
Shields, javelins, sabres, gleaming from below,
Full soon discover'd to my tortur'd sight
The straits in Persia's pow'r. The Phocian chief,
Whate'er the cause, relinquishing his post,
Was to a neighb'ring eminence remov'd;
There, by the foe neglected, or contemn'd,
Remain'd in arms, and neither fled, nor fought.
I staid for day spring. Then the Persian mov'd.
To-morrow's sun will see their numbers here.'

He said no more. Unutterable fear
In silence wraps the list'ning croud.

Aghast, confounded. Silent are the chiefs,
Who feel no terror; yet in wonder fix'd,
Thick-wedg'd, inclose Leonidas around,
Who thus in calmest elocution spake.

'I now behold the oracle fulfill'd.
Then art thou near, thou glorious, sacred hour,
Which shalt my country's liberty secure.
Thrice hail thou solemn period. Thee the tongues
Of virtue, fame and freedom shall proclaim,
Shall celebrate in ages yet unborn.
Thou godlike offspring of a godlike sire,
To him my kindest greetings, Medon, bear.
Farewell, Megistias, holy friend and brave.
Thou too, experienc'd, venerable chief,
Demophilus, farewell. Farewell to thee,
Invincible Diomedon, to thee,
Unequall'd Dithyrambus, and to all,
Ye other dauntless warriors, who may claim
Praise from my lips, and friendship from my heart.
You after all the wonders, which your swords
Have here accomplish'd, will enrich your names
By fresh renown. Your valour must complete,
What ours begins. Here first th' astonish'd foe
On dying Spartans shall with terror gaze,
And tremble, while he conquers. Then, by fate
Led from his dreadful victory to meet
United Greece in phalanx o'er the plain,
By your avenging spears himself shall fall.'

Forth from the assembly strides Platæa's chief.
'By the twelve gods, enthron'd in heav'n supreme,
By my fair name, unsully'd yet, I swear,
Thine eye, Leonidas, shall ne'er behold
Diomedon forsake thee. First let strength
Desert my limbs, and fortitude my heart.
Did I not face the Marathonian war?
Have I not seen Thermopylæ? What more
Can fame bestow, which I should wait to share?



Where can I, living, purchase brighter praise,
Than dying here? What more illustrious tomb
Can I obtain, than bury'd in the heaps
Of Persians, fall'n my victims, on this rock
To lie distinguish'd by a thousand wounds?'

He ended; when Demophilus. 'O king
Of Lacedæmon, pride of human race,
Whom none e'er equall'd, but the seed of Jove,
Thy own forefather, number'd with the gods,
Lo! I am old. With falt'ring steps I tread
The prone descent of years. My country claim'd
My youth, my ripeness. Feeble age but yields
An empty name of service. What remains
For me unequal to the winged speed
Of active hours, which court the swift and young?
What eligible wish can wisdom form,
But to die well? Demophilus shall close
With thee, O hero, on this glorious earth
His eve of life.' The youth of Thespia next
Address'd Leonidas. 'O first of Greeks,
Me too think worthy to attend thy fame
With this most dear, this venerable man,
Forever honor'd from my tend'rest age,
Ev'n till on life's extremity we part.
Nor too aspiring let my hopes be deem'd;
Should the Barbarian in his triumph mark
My youthful limbs among the gory heaps,
Perhaps remembrance may unnerve his arm
In future fields of contest with a race,
To whom the flow'r, the blooming joys of life
Are less alluring, than a noble death.'

To him his second parent. 'Wilt thou bleed,
My Dithyrambus? But I here withhold
All counsel from thee, who art wise, as brave.
I know thy magnanimity. I read
Thy gen'rous thoughts. Decided is thy choice;
Come then, attendants on a godlike shade,

When to th' Elysian ancestry of Greece
Descends her great protector, we will shew
To Harmatides an illustrious son,
And no unworthy brother. We will link
Our shields together. We will press the ground,
Still undivided in the arms of death.
So if th' attentive traveller we draw
To our cold reliques, wond'ring, shall he trace
The diff'rent scene, then pregnant with applaus
O wise old man, exclaim, the hour of fate
Well didst thou chuse; and, O unequall'd youth,
Who for thy country didst thy bloom devote,
May'st thou remain forever dear to fame!
May time rejoice to name thee! O'er thy urn
May everlasting peace her pinion spread.[2]

This said, the hero with his lifted shield
His face o'ershades; he drops a secret tear:
Not this a tear of anguish, but deriv'd
From fond affection, grown mature with time,
Awak'd a manly tenderness alone,
Unmix'd with pity, or with vain regret.

A stream of duty, gratitude and love
Flow'd from the heart of Harmatides' son,
Addressing straight Leonidas, whose looks
Declar'd unspeakable applause. 'O king
Of Lacedæmon, now distribute praise
From thy accustom'd justice, small to me,
To him a portion large. His guardian care,
His kind instruction, his example train'd
My infancy, my youth. From him I learn'd
To live, unspotted. Could I less, than learn
From him to die with honor.' Medon hears.
Shook by a whirlwind of contending thoughts
Strong heaves his manly bosom, under awe
Of wise Melissa, torn by friendship, fir'd
By such example high. In dubious state
So rolls a vessel, when th' inflated waves



ike assail, and winds her canvass rend;
der labours, and requires a hand
delib'rate skill. The gen'rous king
's the hero's struggle, and prepares
pose relief; when instant came
before them. Short he spake.

rian myriads through the secret pass
ter'd Greece. Leonidas, by morn
hem here. My slender force I spar'd.
have died was useless. We return
ee to perish. Union of our strength
der more illustrious to ourselves,
he foe more terrible our fall.'

tias last accosts Laconia's king.
hom the gods have chosen to exalt
ankind in virtue and renown,
t me presumptuous, who implore
these hevoes thy regardful ear.
dæmon I a stranger came,
ound protection. There to honors rais'd,
ot yet the benefit repaid.
w the gen'rous Spartans may behold
eir large beneficence not vain,
their cause I consecrate my breath.'

o, Megistias,' interpos'd the king.
nd thy son retire.' Again the seer—

d it, thou eternally ador'd,
confirm my persevering soul!
me these auspicious moments lose,
my bounteous patrons I may show,
leserv'd their favor. Thou, my child,
enalippus, heed the king's command,
paternal tenderness revere;
om these ranks withdraw thee, to my use
ns surrend'ring. Fortune will supply

New proofs of valor. Vanquish them, or find
A glorious grave; but spare thy father's eye
The bitter anguish to behold thy youth
Untimely bleed before him.' Grief suspends
His speech, and interchangeably their arms
Impart the last embraces. Either weeps,
The hoary parent, and the blooming son.

But from his temples the pontific wreath
Megistias now unloosens. He resigns
His hallow'd vestments; while the youth in tears
The helmet o'er his parent's snowy locks,
O'er his broad chest adjusts the radiant mail.

Dieneces was nigh. Oppress'd by shame,
His downcast visage Menalippus hid
From him, who cheerful thus. 'Thou needst not blu
Thou hear'st thy father and the king command,
What I suggested, thy departure hence.
Train'd by my care, a soldier thou return'st.
Go, practice my instructions. Oft in fields
Of future conflict may thy prowess call
Me to remembrance. Spare thy words. Farewell.'

While such contempt of life, such fervid zeal
To die with glory animate the Greeks,
Far diff'rent thoughts possess Argestes' soul.
Amaze and mingled terror chill his blood.
Cold drops distill'd from ev'ry pore, bedew
His shiv'ring flesh. His bosom pants. His knees
Yield to their burden. Ghastly pallid his cheeks,
Pale are his lips, and trembling. Such the minds
Of slaves corrupt; on them the beauteous face
Of virtue turns to horror. But these words
From Lacedæmon's chief the wretch relieve.

'Return to Xerxes. Tell him, on this rock
The Grecians faithful to their trust await
His chosen myriads. Tell him, thou hast seen,

How far the lust of empire is below
A freeborn spirit; that my death, which seals
My country's safety, is indeed a boon,
His fully gives, a precious boon, which Greece
Will by perdition to his throne repay.'

He said. The Persian hastens through the pass.
Once more the stern Diomedon arose.
Wrath overcast his forehead, while he spake.

'Yet more must stay and bleed. Detested Thebes
Ne'er shall receive her traitors back. This spot
Shall see their perfidy aton'd by death,
Ev'n from that pow'r, to which their abject hearts
Have sacrific'd their faith. Nor dare to hope,
Ye vile deserters of the public weal.
Ye coward slaves, that, mingled in the heaps
Of gen'rous victims to their country's good,
You shall your shame conceal. Whoe'r shall pass
Along the field of glorious slain, and mark
With veneration ev'ry nobler corse;
His heart, though warm in rapturous applause,
Shall while shall curb the transport to repeat
His execrations o'er such impious heads,
On whom that fate, to others yielding fame,
Is infamy and vengeance.' Dreadful thus
On the pale Thebans sentence he pronounc'd,
Like Rhadamanthus from th' infernal seat
Of judgment, which inexorably dooms
The guilty dead to ever-during pain;
While Phlegethon his flaming volumes rolls
Before their sight, and ruthless furies shake
Their hissing serpents. All the Greeks assent
In clamors, echoing through the concave rock.
Forth Anaxander in th' assembly stood,
Which he address'd with indignation feign'd.

'If yet your clamours, Grecians, are allay'd,
Lo! I appear before you to demand,



Why these my brave companions, who alone
Among the Thebans through dissuading crowds
Their passage force'd to join your camp, should bear
The name of traitors! By an exil'd wretch
We are traduc'd, by Demaratus, driv'n
From Spartan confines, who hath meanly sought
Barbarian courts for shelter. Hath he drawn
Such virtues thence, that Sparta, who before
Held him unworthy of his native sway,
Should trust him now, and doubt auxiliar friends!
Injurious men! We scorn the thoughts of flight.
Let Asia bring her numbers; unconstrain'd,
We will confront them, and for Greece expire.'

Thus in the garb of virtue he adorn'd
Necessity. Laconia's king perceiv'd
Through all its fair disguise the traitor's heart.
So, when at first mankind in science rude
Rever'd the moon, as bright in native beams,
Some sage, who walk'd with nature through her w
By wisdom led, discern'd the various orb,
Dark in itself, in foreign splendours clad.

Leonidas concludes. 'Ye Spartans, hear;
Hear you, O Grecians, in our lot by choice
Partakers, destin'd to enroll your names
In time's eternal record, and enhance
Your country's lustre: lo! the noontide blaze
Inflames the broad horizon. Each retire;
Each in his tent invoke the pow'r of sleep
To brace his vigour, to enlarge his strength
For long endurance. When the sun descends,
Let each appear in arms. You, brave allies
Of Corinth, Phlius, and Mycenæ's tow'rs,
Arcadians, Locrians, must not yet depart.
While we repose, embattled wait. Retreat,
When we our tents abandon. I resign
To great Oileus' son supreme command.
Take my embraces, Æschylus. The fleet
Expects thee. To Themistocles report,



What thou hast seen and heard. O thrice farewell!'
Th' Athenian answer'd. 'To yourselves, my friends,
Your virtues immortality secure,
Your bright examples victory to Greece.'

Retaining these injunctions, all dispers'd;
While in his tent Leonidas remain'd
Apart with Agis, whom he thus bespake.
'Yet in our fall the pond'rous hand of Greece
Shall Asia feel. This Persian's welcome tale
Of us, inextricably doom'd her prey,
As by the force of sorcery will wrap
Security around her, will suppress
All sense, all thought of danger. Brother, know,
That soon, as Cynthia from the vault of heav'n
Withdraws her shining lamp, through Asia's host
Shall massacre and desolation rage.
Yet not to base associates will I trust
My vast design. Their perfidy might warn
The unsuspecting foe, our fairest fruits
Of glory thus be wither'd. Ere we move,
While on the solemn sacrifice intent,
As Lacedæmon's ancient laws ordain,
Our pray'rs we offer to the tuneful nine,
Thou whisper through the willing ranks of Thebes
Slow and in silence to disperse and fly.'

Now left by Agis, on his couch reclin'd,
The Spartan king thus meditates alone.

'My fate is now impending. O my soul,
What more auspicious period couldst thou chuse
For death, than now, when, beating high in joy,
Thou tell'st me I am happy? If to live,
Or die, as virtue dictates, be to know
The purest bliss; if she her charms displays
Still lovely, still unfading, still serene
To youth, to age, to death: whatever be
Those other climes of happiness unchang'd,
Which heav'n in dark futurity conceals,

Still here, O virtue, thou art all our good.
Oh! what a black, unspeakable reverse
Must the unrighteous, must the tyrant prove!
What in the struggle of departing day,
When life's last glimpse, extinguishing, presents
Unknown, inextricable gloom? But how
Can I explain the terrors of a breast,
Where guilt resides? Leonidas, forego
The horrible conception, and again
Within thy own felicity retire;
Bow grateful down to him, who form'd thy mind,
Of crimes unfruitful, never to admit
The black impression of a guilty thought.
Else could I fearless by deliberate choice
Relinquish life. This calm from minds depraved
Is ever absent. Oft in them the force
Of some prevailing passion for a time
Suppresses fear. Precipitate they lose
The sense of danger; when dominion, wealth,
Or purpled pomp enchant the dazzled sight,
Pursuing still the joys of life alone.

'But he, who calmly seeks a certain death,
When duty only, and the gen'ral good
Direct his courage, must a soul possess,
Which, all content deducing from itself,
Can by unerring virtue's constant light
Discern, when death is worthy of his choice.

'The man, thus great and happy, in the scope
Of his large mind is stretch'd beyond his date.
Ev'n on this shore of being he in thought,
Supremely bless'd, anticipates the good,
Which late posterity from him derives.'

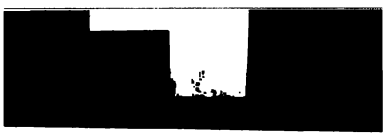
At length the hero's meditations close.
The swelling transport of his heart subsides
In soft oblivion; and the silken plumes
Of sleep envelope his extended limbs.

LEONIDAS.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Leonidas, rising before sun-set, dismisses the forces under the command of Medon; but observing a reluctance in him to depart, reminds him of his duty, and gives him an affectionate farewell. He then relates to his own select band a dream, which is interpreted by Megistias, arms himself, and marches in procession with his whole troop to an altar, newly raised on a neighbouring meadow; there offers a sacrifice to the muses; he invokes the assistance of those goddesses; he animates his companions; then, placing himself at their head, leads them against the enemy in the dead of the night.



LEONIDAS.

BOOK XI.

HE day was closing. Agis left his tent.
ought his god-like brother. Him he found
:eh'd o'er his tranquil couch. His looks retain'd
cheerful tincture of his waking thoughts.
gladden sleep. So smile soft evening skies,
streak'd with ruddy light, when summer's suns
e veil'd their beaming foreheads. Transport fill'd
eye of Agis. Friendship swell'd his heart.
yielding knee in veneration bent.
hero's hand he kiss'd, then fervent thus.

excellence ineffable, receive
secret homage; and may gentle sleep
longer seal thine eyelids, that, unblam'd,
y fall down before thee.' He concludes
loration of his friend divine,
se brow the shades of slumber now forsake.
when the rising sun resumes his state,
e white-rob'd magus on Euphrates side,
ndian seer on Ganges prostrate falls
re th' emerging glory, to salute
t radiant emblem of th' immortal mind.

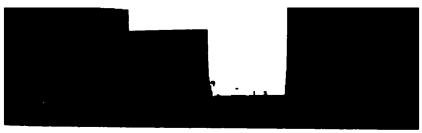
prise both heroes. From their tents in arms
ear the bands elect. The other Greeks
filing homeward. Only Medon stops.
ssa's dictates he forgets awhile.
nattentive to the warning voice
lelibœus, earnest he surveys
idas. Such constancy of zeal
ood Oileus' offspring brings the sire

To full remembrance in that solemn hour,
And draws these cordial accents from the king.

'Approach me, Locrian. In thy look I trace
Consummate faith and love. But, vers'd in arms,
Against thy gen'ral's orders wouldst thou stay?
Go, prove to kind Oileus, that my heart
Of him was mindful, when the gates of death
I barr'd against his son. Yon gallant Greeks,
To thy commanding care from mine transfer'd,
Remove from certain slaughter. Last repair
To Lacedæmon. Thither lead thy sire.
Say to her senate, to her people tell,
Here didst thou leave their countrymen and king
On death resolv'd, obedient to the laws.

The Locrian chief, restraining tears, replies—
'My sire, left slumb'ring in the island-fane,
Awoke no more'—'Then joyful I shall meet
Him soon,' the king made answer.—'Let thy worth
Supply thy father's. Virtue bids me die,
Thee live. Farewell.' Now Medon's grief, o'erawe'
By wisdom, leaves his long-suspended mind
To firm decision. He departs, prepar'd
For all the duties of a man, by deeds
To prove himself the friend of Sparta's king,
Melissa's brother, and Oileus' son.

The gen'rous victims of the public weal,
Assembled now, Leonidas salutes,
His pregnant soul disburd'ning—'O thrice hail!
Surround me, Grecians; to my words attend.
This evening's sleep no sooner press'd my brows,
Than o'er my head the empyreal form
Of heav'n-enthron'd Alcides was display'd.
I saw his magnitude divine. His voice
I heard, his solemn mandate to arise.
I rose. He bade me follow. I obey'd.
A mountain's summit, clear'd from mist, or cloud,



We reach'd in silence. Suddenly the howl
Of wolves and dogs, the vulture's piercing shriek,
The yell of ev'ry beast and bird of prey
Discordant grated on my ear. I turn'd.
A surface hideous, delug'd o'er with blood,
Beyond my view illimitably stretch'd,
One vast expanse of horror. There supine,
Of huge dimension, cov'ring half the plain,
A giant corse lay mangled, red with wounds,
Delv'd in th' enormous flesh, which, bubbling, fed
Ten thousand, thousand grisly beaks and jaws,
Insatiably devouring. Mute I gaz'd;
When from behind I heard a second sound
Like furges, tumbling o'er a craggy shore.
Again I turn'd. An ocean there appear'd
With riven keels and shrouds, with shiver'd oars,
With arms and wel'tring carcasses bestrewn
Innumerous. The billows foam'd in blood.
But where the waters, unobserv'd before,
Between two adverse shores, contracting, roll'd
A stormy current, on the beach forlorn
One of majestic stature I descry'd
In ornaments imperial. Oft he bent
On me his clouded eyeballs. Oft my name
He sounded forth in execrations loud;
Then rent his splendid garments; then his head
In rage divested of its graceful hairs.
Impatient now he ey'd a slender skiff
Which, mounted high on boist'rous waves approach'd.
With indignation, with reluctant grief
Once more his sight reverting, ne embark'd
Amid the perils of the frowning deep.
O thou, by glorious actions rank'd in heav'n,
I here exclaim'd, instruct me. What produc'd
This desolation? Hercules reply'd.
Let thy astonish'd eye again survey
The scene, thy soul abhorr'd. I look'd. I saw
A land, where plenty with disporting hands
Pour'd all the fruits of Amalthea's horn;

Where bloom'd the olive; where the clustring vine
With her broad foliage mantled ev'ry hill;
Where Ceres with exuberance enrob'd
The pregnant bosoms of the fields in gold;
Where spacious towns, whose circuits proud contain'd
The dazzling works of wealth along the banks
Of copious rivers shew'd their stately tow'rs,
The strength and splendour of the peopled land.
Then in a moment clouds obscur'd my view;
At once all vanish'd from my waking eyes.

Thrice I salute the omen, loud began
The sage Megistias. In this mystic dream
I see my country's victories. The land,
The deep shall own her triumphs; while the tears
Of Asia and of Libya shall deplore
Their offspring, cast before the vulture's beak,
And ev'ry monstrous native of the main.
Those joyous fields of plenty picture Greece,
Enrich'd by conquest, and Barbarian spoils.
He, whom thou saw'st, in regal vesture clad,
Print on the sand his solitary step,
Is Xerxes, foil'd and fugitive.' So spake
The rev'rend augur. Ev'ry bosom felt
Enthusiastic rapture, joy beyond
All sense, and all conception, but of those,
Who die to save their country. Here again
Th' exulting band Leonidas address'd.

'Since happiness from virtue is deriv'd,
Who for his country dies, that moment proves
Most happy, as most virtuous. Such our lot.
But go, Megistias. Instantly prepare
The sacred fuel, and the victim due;
That to the muses (so by Sparta's law
We are enjoin'd) our off'rings may be paid,
Before we march. Remember, from the rites
Let ev'ry sound be absent; not the fife,
Not ev'n the music-breathing flute be heard.



ne, ye leaders, ev'ry band instruct
e in silence. Mindful of their charge
efs depart. Leonidas provides
ous armour. Agis close attends,
assistant. First a breastplate arms
cious chest. O'er this the hero spreads
iled cuirass, from his shoulders hung.
g belt infolds his mighty loins.
his stately temples he erects
med helm; then grasps his pond'rous shield:
ugh the center on projecting brass
uitable artist had emboss'd
pe of great Alcides; whom to gain
idesses contended. Pleasure here
soft wiles th' attracted eye; and there
n of Virtue dignify'd the scene.
ajestic sweetness was display'd
d sublime and happy. From her lips
eloquence to flow. In look serene,
l intensely on the son of Jove,
'd her hand, where, winding to the skies,
is ascended. On the summit stood,
ed by a trophy near to heav'n,
nd protended her eternal trump.
th attentive to her wisdom own'd
valence of Virtue; while his eye,
that spirit, which redeem'd the world
ranny and monsters, darted flames;
escry'd by Pleasure, where she lay
a gorgeous canopy. Around
w'rets strewn, and wantonly in rills
meander'd All relax'd her limbs;
ting yet solicitude to gain,
it she fear'd, as struggling with despair,
a'd collecting ev'ry pow'r to charm:
f sweet allurement she diffus'd
Still Virtue sway'd Alcides' mind.
ll his labours. Wrought with vary'd art,
ld's external surface they enrich'd.



This portraiture of glory on his arm
Leonidas displays, and, tow'ring, strides
From his pavilion. Ready are the bands.
The chiefs assume their station. Torches blaze
Through ev'ry file. All now in silent pace
To join in solemn sacrifice proceed.
First Polydorus bears the hallow'd knife,
The sacred salt and barley. At his side
Diomedon sustains a weighty mace.
The priest, Megistias, follows like the rest
In polish'd armour. White as winter's fleece,
A fillet round his shining helm reveals
The sacerdotal honors. By the horns,
Where laurels twine, with Alpheus Maron leads
The consecrated ox. And lo! behind,
Leonidas advances. Never he
In such transcendent majesty was seen,
And his own virtue never so enjoy'd.
Successive move Dieneces the brave,
In hoary state Demophilus, the bloom
Of Dithyrambus, glowing in the hope
Of future praise, the gen'rous Agis next
Serene and graceful, last the Theban chiefs,
Repining, ignominious: then slow march
The troops all mute, nor shake their brazen arms.

Not from Thermopylæ remote the hills
Of Oeta, yielding to a fruitful dale,
Within their side, half-circling, had inclos'd
A fair expanse in verdure smooth. The bounds
Were edg'd by wood, o'erlook'd by snowy cliffs,
Which from the clouds bent frowning. Down a roel
Above the loftiest summit of the grove
A tumbling torrent wore the shagged stone;
Then, gleaming through the intervals of shade,
Attain'd the valley, where the level stream
Diffus'd refreshment. On its banks the Greeks
Had rais'd a rustic altar, fram'd of turf.
Broad was the surface, high in piles of wood,

All interspers'd with laurel. Purer deem'd,
Than river, lake, or fountain, in a vase
Old Ocean's briny element was plac'd
Before the altar; and of wine unmix'd
Capacious goblets stood. Megistias now
His helm unloosen'd. With his snowy head,
Uncover'd, round the solemn pile he trod.
He shook a branch of laurel, scatt'ring wide
The sacred moisture of the main. His hand
Next on the altar, on the victim strew'd
The mingled salt and barley. Oe'r the horns
Th' inverted chalice, foaming from the grape,
Discharg'd a rich libation. Then approach'd
Diomedon. Megistias gave the sign.
Down sunk the victim by a deathful stroke,
Nor groan'd. The augur bury'd in the throat
His hallow'd steel. A purple current flow'd.
Now smok'd the structure, now it flam'd abroad
In sudden splendour. Deep in circling ranks
The Grecians press'd. Each held a sparkling brand;
The beaming lances intermix'd; the helms,
The burnish'd armour multiply'd the blaze.
Leonidas drew nigh. Before the pile
His feet he planted. From his brows remov'd,
The casque to Agis he consign'd; his shield,
His spear to Dithyrambus; then, his arms
Extending, forth in supplication broke—

'Harmonious daughters of Olympian Jove,
Who, on the top of Helicon ador'd,
And high Parnassus, with delighted ears
Bend to the warble of Castalia's stream,
Or Aganippe's murmur, if from thence
We must invoke your presence; or along
The neighb'ring mountains with propitious steps
If now you grace your consecrated bow'rs,
Look down, ye Muses; nor disdain to stand
Each an immortal witness of our fate.
But with you being fair Liberty, whom Jove

And you most honor. Let her sacred eyes
Approve her dying Grecians; let her voice
In exultation tell the earth and heav'ns,
These are her sons Then strike your tuneful shells.
Record us guardians of our parent's age,
Our matron's virtue, and our children's bloom,
The glorious bulwarks of our country's laws,
Who shall ennoble the historian's page,
Shall on the joyous festival inspire
With loftier strains the virgin's choral song.
Then, O celestial maids, on yonder camp
Let night sit heavy. Let a sleep like death
Weigh down the eye of Asia. O infuse
A cool, untroubled spirit in our breasts,
Which may in silence guide our daring feet,
Controul our fury, nor by tumult wild
The friendly dark affright; till dying groans
Of slaughter'd tyrants into horror wake
The midnight calm. Then turn destruction loose.
Let terror, let confusion rage around,
In one vast ruin heap the barb'rous ranks,
Their horse, their chariots. Let the spurning steed
Imbrue his hoofs in blood, the shatter'd cars
Crush with their brazen weight the prostrate necks
Of chiefs and kings, encircled, as they fall,
By nations slain. You, countrymen and friends,
My last commands retain. Your gen'ral's voice
Once more salutes you, not to rouse the brave,
Or minds, resolv'd and dauntless, to confirm.
Too well b· this expiring blaze I see
Impatient valour flash from ev'ry eye.
O temper well that ardour, and your lips
Close on the rising transport. Mark, how sleep
Hath folded millions in his black embrace.
No sound is wafted from th' unnumber'd foe.
The winds themselves are silent. All conspires
To this great sacrifice, where thousands soon
Shall only wake to die. Their crowded train
This night perhaps to Pluto's dreary shades



Xerxes' ghost may lead, unless reserv'd
this destruction to lament a doom
ore disgrace, when Greece confounds that pow
h we will shake. But look the setting moon
on our darksome paths her waining horns.
ich his head distinguish by a wreath
ell-earn'd laurel. Then the victim share,
crown the goblet. Take your last repast;
your forefathers, and the heroes old
ext will banquet in the bless'd abodes.'

e ends their leader. Through th' encircling croud
gitation of their spears denotes
ardour. So the spiry growth of pines
k'd, when Æolus in eddies winds
ig their stately trunks on Pelion's brow.
Acarnanian seer distributes swift
ered laurel. Snatch'd in eager zeal
d each helm the woven leaves unite
glossy verdure to the floating plumes.
is the victim portion'd. In the bowl
flows the vine's empurpled stream. Aloof
Theban train in wan dejection mute
o'er their shame, or cast affrighted looks
at determin'd courage, which, unmov'd
e's approach, with cheerful lips could taste
parkling goblet, could in joy partake
ast, that glorious banquet. Ev'n the heart
naxander had forgot its wiles,
mbling fear no longer. Agis here,
rdful ever of the king's command,
ts the Theban chiefs in whispers thus—

onidas permits you to retire.
: on the rites of sacrifice employ'd,
heed your motions. Separate and fly
ent pace.' This heard, th' inglorious troop
files dissolving, from the rest withdraw.
en they moulder from the host like snow,

Freed from the rigour of constraining frost;
Soon as the sun exerts his orient beam,
The transitory landscape melts in rills
Away, and structures, which delude the eye,
Insensibly are lost. The solemn feast
Was now concluded. Now Laconia's king
Had reassum'd his arms. Before his step
The croud roll backward. In their gladden'd sight
His crest, illumin'd by uplifted brands,
Its purple splendour shakes. The tow'ring oak
Thus from a lofty promontory waves
His majesty of verdure. As with joy
The sailors mark his heav'n-ascending pride,
Which from afar directs their foamy course
Along the pathless ocean; so the Greeks
In transport gaze, as down their op'ning ranks
The king proceeds: from whose superior frame
A soul like thine, O Phidias, might conceive
In Parian marble, or effulgent brass
The form of great Apollo; when the god,
Won by the pray'rs of man's afflicted race,
In arms forsook his lucid throne to pierce
The monster Python in the Delphian vale.
Close by the hero Polydorus waits
To guide destruction through the Asian tents,
As the young eagle near his parent's side
In wanton flight essays his vig'rous wing,
Ere long with her to penetrate the clouds,
To dart impetuous on the fleecy train,
And dye his beak in gore; by Sparta's king
The injur'd Polydorus thus prepares
His arm for death. He feasts his angry soul
On promis'd vengeance. His impatient thoughts
Ev'n now transport him furious to the seat
Of his long sorrows, not with fetter'd hands,
But now once more a Spartan with his spear,
His shield restor'd, to lead his country's bands,
And with them devastation. Nor the rest
Neglect to form. Thick-rang'd, the helmets blend



' various plumes, as intermingling oaks
ine their foliage in Dodona's grove;
the cedars on the Syrian hills
' shady texture spread. Once more the king,
ll the phalanx his consid'rate view
ding, through the ruddy gleam descries
ace of gladness; but the godlike van
ost contemplates: Agis, Alpheus there,
tias, Maron with Platæa's chief,
ees, Demophilus are seen
Thespia's youth: nor they their steady sight
his remove, in speechless transport bound
e, by veneration; till they hear
it injunction. To their diff'rent posts
sep'rate. Instant on the dewy turf
ist th' extinguish'd brands. On all around
sudden darkness, on the wood, the hill,
nowy ridge, the vale, the silver stream.
ſ'd on midnight. Tow'rd the hostile camp
reh compos'd and silent down the pass
halanx mov'd. Each patient bosom hush'd
ggling spirit, nor in whispers breath'd
ipt'rous ardour, virtue then inspir'd.
ring clouds along th' etherial void
v expansion from the gloomy north
e suspend their horrors, destin'd soon
ze in lightnings, and to burst in storms.





LEONIDAS.

BOOK XII.



THE ARGUMENT.

Leonidas and the Grecians penetrate through the Persian camp to the very pavilion of Xerxes, who avoids destruction by flight. The Barbarians are slaughtered in great multitudes, and their camp is set on fire. Leonidas conducts his men in good order back to Thermopylæ, engages the Persians, who were descended from the hills, and after numberless proofs of superior strength and valor, sinks down covered with wounds, and expires the last of all the Grecian commanders.





LEONIDAS.

BOOK XII.

ACROSS th' unguarded bound of Asia's camp
Slow pass the Grecians. Through innum'rous tents,
Where all is mute and tranquil, they pursue
Their march sedate. Beneath the leaden hand
Of sleep lie millions motionless and deaf,
Nor dream of fate's approach. Their wary foes,
By Polydorus guided, still proceed.
Ev'n to the centre of th' extensive host
They pierce unseen; when lo! th' imperial tent
Yet distant rose before them. Spreading round
Th' august pavilion, was an ample space
For thousands in arrangement. Here a band
Of chosen Persians, watchful o'er the king,
Held their nocturnal station. As the hearts
Of anxious nations, whom th' unsparing sword,
Or famine threaten, tremble at the sight
Of fear-engender'd phantoms in the sky,
Aerial hosts amid the clouds array'd,
Portending woe and death; the Persian guard
In equal consternation now descry'd
The glimpse of hostile armour. All disband
As if auxiliar to his favor'd Greeks
Pan held their banner, scatt'ring from its folds
Fear and confusion, which to Xerxes couch,
Swift-winged, fly; thence shake the gen'ral camp,
Whose numbers issue naked, pale, unarm'd,
Wild in amazement, blinded by dismay,
To ev'ry foe obnoxious. In the breasts
Of thousands, gor'd at once, the Grecian steel
Reeks in destruction. Deluges of blood
Float o'er the field, and foam around the heaps
Of wretches, slain unconscious of the hand,

Which wastes their helpless multitude. Amaze,
Affright, distraction, from his pillow chace
The lord of Asia, who in thought beholds
United Greece in arms. Thy lust of pow'r!
Thy hope of glory! whither are they flown
With all thy pomp? In this distract'rous hour
What could avail th' immeasurable range
Of thy proud camp, save only to conceal
Thy trembling steps, O Xerxes, while thou fly'st?
To thy deserted couch with other looks
With other steps Leonidas is nigh.
Before him terror strides. Gigantic death,
And desolation at his side attend.

The vast pavillion's empty space, where lamps
Of gold shed light and odours, now admits
The hero. Ardent throngs behind him press,
But miss their victim. To the ground are hurl'd
The glitt'ring ensigns of imperial state.
The diadem, the sceptre, late ador'd
Through boundless kingdoms, underneath their feet
In mingled rage and scorn the warriors crush
A sacrifice to freedom. They return.
Again to form. Leonidas exalts,
For new destruction his resistless spear;
When double darkness suddenly descends.
The clouds, condensing, intercept the stars
Black o'er the furrow'd main the raging east
In whirlwinds sweeps the surge. The coasts resound,
The cavern'd rocks, the crashing forests roar
Swift through the camp the hurricane impells
Its rude career; when Asia's numbers, veil'd
Amid the shelt'ring horrors of the storm,
Evade the victor's lance. The Grecians halt;
While to their gen'rals pregnant mind occurs
A new attempt and vast. Perpetual fire
Beside the tent of Xerxes from the hour,
He lodg'd his standards on the Malian plains,
Had shone. Among his Magi to adore



Great Horomazes was the monarch wont
Before the sacred light. Huge piles of wood
Lay nigh, prepar'd to feed the constant flame.
On living embers these are cast. So wills
Leonidas. The phalanx then divides.
Four troops are form'd, by Dithyrambus led,
By Alpheus, by Diomedon. The last
Himself conducts. The word is giv'n. They seize
The burning fuel. Sparkling in the wind,
Destructive fire is brandish'd. All, enjoin'd
To reassemble at the regal tent,
By various paths the hostile camp invade.

Now devastation, unconfin'd, involves
The Malian fields. Among Barbarian tents
From diff'rent stations fly consuming flames.
The Greeks afford no respite; and the storm
Exasperates the blaze. To ev'ry part
The conflagration like a sea expands,
One waving surface of unbounded fire.
In ruddy volumes mount the curling flames
To heav'n's dark vault, and paint the midnight clouds.
So, when the north emits his purpled lights,
The undulated radiance, streaming wide,
As with a burning canopy invests
Th' etherial concave. Oeta now disclos'd
His forehead glitt'ring in eternal frost;
While down his rocks the foamy torrents shone:
Far o'er the main the pointed rays were thrown;
Night snatch'd her mantle from the ocean's breast;
The billows glimmer'd from the distant shores.

But lo! a pillar huge of smoke ascends,
Which overshades the field. There horror, there
Leonidas presides. Command he gave
To Polydorus, who, exulting, shew'd,
Where Asia's horse, and warlike cars possess'd
A crouded station. At the hero's nod
Devouring Vulcan riots on the stores

Of Ceres, empty'd of the ripen'd grain,
On all the tribute from her meadows brown,
By rich Thessalia render'd to the scythe.
A flood of fire envelopes all the ground.
The cordage bursts around the blazing tents.
Down sink the roofs on suffocated throngs,
Close-wedg'd by fear. The Libyan chariot burns.
Th' Arabian camel, and the Persian steed
Bound through a burning deluge. Wild with pain
They shake their singed manes. Their madding ho
Dash through the blood of thousands, mix'd with fla
Which rage, augmented by the whirlwind's blast,

Meantime the sceptre'd lord of half the globe
From tent to tent precipitates his flight.
Dispers'd are all his satraps. Pride herself
Shuns his dejected brow. Despair alone
Waits on th' imperial fugitive; and shews,
As round the camp his eye, distracted, roves,
No limits to destruction. Now is seen
Aurora, mounting from her eastern hill
In rosy sandals, and with dewy locks.
The winds subside before her; darkness flies;
A stream of light proclaims the cheerful day,
Which sees at Xerxes' tent the conqu'ring bands,
All reunited. What could fortune more
To aid the valiant, what to gorge revenge?
Lo! desolation o'er the adverse host
Hath empty'd all her terrors. Ev'n the hand
Of languid slaughter dropt the crimson steel;
Nor nature longer can sustain the toil
Of unremitted conquest. Yet what pow'r
Among these sons of liberty reviv'd
Their dro ping warmth, new-strung their nerves, rec
Their weary'd swords to deeds of brighter fame?
What, but th' inspiring hope of glorious death
To crown their labours, and th' auspicious look
Of their heroic chief, which, still unchang'd,
Still in superior majesty declar'd,

il had yet relax'd his matchless stre
'orn the vigour of his godlike soul

k to the pass in gentle march he
nbattled warriors. They behind
e Medon sent such numbers to th
bush lie. The tempest is o'erblown.
reezes only from the Malian wave
ach grim face, besmear'd with smoke and gore,
cool refreshment breathe. The healing gale,
stal rill near Oeta's verdant feet
the langour from their harrass'd nerves,
brac'd by strength returning. O'er their heads
full blaze of majesty appears
a, bearing in her hand divine
ternal guardian of illustrious deeds
weet Phœbean lyre. Her graceful train
iite-rob'd virgins, seated on a range
lown the cliff. o'ershadowing the Greeks,
th concordant strings, and accents clear
ent pour of melody, and swell
ı, triumphal, solemn dirge of praise,
ipating fame. Of endless joys
ss'd Elysium was the song. Go, meet
gus, Solon and Zaleucus sage,
iem salute the children of their laws.
Homer, Orpheus and th' Ascrean bard,
with a spirit, by ambrosial food
'd, and more exalted, shall contend
splendid fate to warble through the bow'rs
iaranth and myrtle, ever young,
your renown. Your ashes we will cull.
ider fane deposited, your urns
to the muses shall our lays inspire.
ever off'rings, genius, science, art
edicate to virtue, shall be yours,
ifts of all the Muses, to transmit
n th' enliven'd canvas, marble, brass,
sdom's volume, in the poet's song,

In ev'ry tongue, through ev'ry age and clime.
You of this earth the brightest flow'rs, not cropt,
Transplanted only to immortal bloom
Of praise with men, of happiness with gods.

The Grecian valor on religion's flame
To ecstacy is wafted. Death is nigh.
As by the Graces fashion'd, he appears
A beauteous form. His adamantine gate
Is half unfolded All in transport catch
A glimpse of immortality. Elate
In rapturous delusion they believe,
That to behold and solemnize their fate
The goddesses are present on the hills
With celebrating lyres. In thought serene
Leonidas the kind deception bless'd,
Nor undeceiv'd his soldiers. After all
Th' incessant labours of the horrid night
Through blood, through flames continu'd, he prepar
In order'd battle to confront the pow'rs
Of Hyperanthes from the upper straits.

Not long the Greeks in expectation wait
Impatient. Sudden with tumultuous shouts
Like Nile's rude current, wherein deafening roar
Prone from the steep of Elephantis falls
A sea of waters, Hyperanthes pours
His chosen numbers on the Grecian camp
Down from the hills precipitant. No foes
He finds. The Thebans join him. In his van
They march conductors. On, the Persians roll
In martial thunder through the sounding pass.
They issue forth impetuous from its mouth.
That moment Sparta's leader gave the sign;
When, as the impulse ran in forceful sway
O'erturns a nodding rampart from its base,
And strews a town with ruin, so the band
Of serry'd heroes down the Malian steep,
Tremenduous depth, the mix'd battalions swept



Of Thebes and Persia. There no waters flow'd.
Abrupt and naked all was rock beneath.
Leonidas, inoens'd, with grappling strength
Dash'd Anaxander on a pointed crag;
Compos'd, then gave new orders. At the word
His phalanx, wheeling, penetrates the pass
Astonish'd Persia stops in full career.
Ev'n Hyperanthes shrinks in wonder back.
Confusion drives fresh numbers from the shore
The Malian ooze overwhlems them. Sparta's king
Still presses forward, till an open breadth
Of fifty paces yields his front extent
To profer battle. Hyperanthes soon
Recalls his warriors, dissipates their fears.
Swift on the great Leonidas a cloud
Of darts is show'r'd. Th' encount'ring armies close.

Who first, sublimest hero, felt thy arm?
What rivers heard along their echoing banks
Thy name, in curses sounded from the lips
Of noble mothers, wailing for their sons?
What towns with empty monuments were fill'd
For those, whom thy unconquerable sword
This day to vultures cast? First Bessus died,
A haughty satrap, whose tyrannic sway
Despoil'd Hyrcania of her golden sheaves,
And laid her forests waste. For him the bees
Among the branches interwove their sweets;
For him the fig was ripen'd, and the vine
In rich profusion o'er the goblet foam'd
Then Dinis bled. On Hermus' side he reign'd;
He long assiduous, unavailing woo'd
The martial queen of Caria. She disdain'd
A lover's soft complaint. Her rigid ear
Was fram'd to watch the tempest, while it rag'd,
Her eye accustom'd on the rolling deck
To brave the turgid billow. Near the shore
She now is present in her pinnace light.
The spectacle of glory crouds her breast

With diff'rent passions. Valiant, she applauds
The Grecian valor; faithful, she laments
Her sad presage of Persia: prompts her son
To emulation of the Greeks in arms,
And of herself in loyalty. By fate
Is she reserv'd to signalize that day
Of future shame when Xerxes must behold
The blood of nations overflow his decks,
And to their bottom tinge the briny floods
Of Salamis; whence she with Asia flies,
She only not inglorious. Low reclines
Her lover now, on Hermus to repeat
Her name no more, nor tell the vocal groves
His fruitless sorrows. Next Maduces, fell,
A Paphlagonian. Born amid the sound
Of chasing surges, and the roar of winds,
He o'er th' inhospitable Euxin foam
Was wont from high Carambis' rock to ken
Ill-fated keels, which cut the Pontic stream,
Then with his dire associates through the deed
For spoil and slaughter guide his savage prow.
Him dogs will rend ashore. From Medus far,
Their native current, two bold brothers died,
Sisamnes and Tithraustes, potent lords
Of rich domains. On these Mithrines, grey,
Cilician prince, Lilæbus, who had left
The balmy fragrance of Arabia's fields
With Babylonian Tenagon expir'd.

The growing carnage Hyperanthes views
Indignant, fierce in vengeful ardor strides
Against the victor. Each his lance protends;
But Asia's numbers interpose their shields,
Solicitous to guard a prince rever'd:
Or thither fortune whelm'd the tide of war,
His term protracting for augmented fame.
So two proud vessels, lab'ring on the foam,
Present for battle their destructive beaks;
When ridgy seas, by hurricanes upturn,



In mountainous commotion dash between
And either deck, in black'ning tempest veil'd,
Waft from its distant foe. More fiercely burn'd
Thy spirit, mighty Sparta. Such dismay
Relax'd thy foes, that each Barbarian heart
Resign'd all hopes of victory. The steeds
Of day were climbing their meridian height.
Continu'd shouts of onset from the pass
Resounded o'er the plain. Artuchus heard.
When first the spreading tumult had alarm'd
His distant quarter, starting from repose,
He down the valley of Spercheos rush'd
To aid his regal master. Asia's camp
He found the seat of terror and despair.
As in some fruitful clime, which late hath known
The rage of winds and floods, although the storm
Be heard no longer, and the deluge fled
Still o'er the wasted region nature mourns
In melancholy silence; through the grove
With prostrate glories lie the stately oak,
Th' uprooted elm and beach; the plain is spread
With fragments, swept from villages o'erthrown,
Around the pastures flocks and herds are cast
In dreary piles of death: so Persia's host
In terror mute one boundless scene displays
Of devastation. Half-devour'd by fire,
Her tall pavilions, and her martial cars
Deform the wide encampment. Here in gore
Her princes welter, nameless thousands there,
Not victims all to Greeks. In gasping heaps
Barbarians, mangled by Barbarians, shew'd
The wild confusion of that direful night;
When, wanting signals, and a leader's care,
They rush'd on mutual slaughter. Xerxes' tent
On its exalted summit, when the dawn
First streak'd the orient sky, was wont to bear
The golden form of Mithra, clos'd between
Two lucid crystals. This the general host
Observ'd, their awful signal to arrange

In arms compleat, and numberless to watch
Their monarch's rising. This conspicuous blaze
Artuchus places in th' accustom'd seat.
As, after winds have ruffled by a storm
The plumes of darkness, when her welcome face
The morning lifts serene, each wary swain
Collects his flock dispers'd; the neighing steed,
The herds forsake their shelter: all return
To well known pastures, and frequented streams:
So now this cheering signal on the tent
Revives each leader. From inglorious flight
Their scatter'd bands they call, their wonted ground
Resume, and hail Artuchus. From their swarms
A force he culls. Thermopylæ he seeks.
Fell shouts in horrid dissonance precede.

His phalanx swift Leonidas commands
To circle backward from the Malian bay.
Their order changes. Now, half-orb'd, they stand
By Oeta's fence protected from behind,
With either flank united to the rock.
As by th' excelling architect dispos'd
To shield some haven, a stupendous mole,
Fram'd of the grove and quarry's mingled strength,
In ocean's bosom penetrates afar:
There, pride of art, immoveable it looks
On Eolus and Neptune; there defies
Those potent gods combin'd: unyielding thus,
The Grecians stood a solid mass of war
Against Artuchus, join'd with numbers new
To Hyperanthes. In the foremost rank
Leonidas his dreadful station held.
Around him soon a spacious void was seen
By flight, or slaughter in the Persian van.
In gen'rous shame and wrath Artuchus burns,
Discharging full at Lacedæmon's chief
An iron-studded mace. It glanc'd aside,
Turn'd by the massy buckler. Prone to earth
The satrap fell. Alexander aim'd his spear,



Which had transfix'd him prostrate on the rock,
But for th' immediate succour, he obtain'd
From faithful soldiers, lifting on their shields
A chief belov'd. Not such Alcander's lot.
An arrow wounds his heart. Supine he lies,
The only Theban, who to Greece preserv'd
Unviolated faith. Physician sage,
On pure Cithæron healing herbs to cull
Was he accustom'd, to expatiate o'er
The Heliconian pastures, where no plants
Of poison spring, of juice salubrious all,
Which vipers, winding in their verdant track,
Drink and expel the venom from their tooth,
Dipt in the sweetness of that soil divine.
On him the brave Artontes sinks in death,
Renown'd through wide Bithynia, ne'er again,
The clam'rous rites of Cybele to share;
While echo murmurs through the hollow caves
Of Bereeynthian Dindymus. The strength
Of Alpheus sent him to the shades of night.
Ere from the dead was disengag'd the spear,
Huge Abradates, glorying in his might,
Surpassing all of Cissian race, advanc'd
To grapple; planting firm his foremost step,
The victor's throat he grasp'd. At Nemea's games
The wrestler's chaplet Alpheus had obtain'd.
He summons all his art. Oblique the stroke
Of his swift foot supplants the Persian's heel,
He, falling, clings by Alpheus' neck, and drags
His foe upon him. In the Spartan's back
Enrag'd Barbarians fix their thronging spears.
To Abradates' chest the weapons pass;
They rivet both in death. This Maron sees,
This Polydorus, frowning. Victims, strewn
Before their vengeance, hide their brother's corse:
At length the gen'rous blood of Maron warms
The sword of Hyperanthes. On the spear
Of Polydorus falls the pond'rous axe
Of Sacian Mardus. From the yielding wood

The steely point is sever'd. Undismay'd,
The Spartan stoops to rear the knotted mace,
Left by Artuehus; but thy fatal blade,
Abrocomes, that dreadful instant watch'd
To rend his op'ning side. Unconquer'd still,
Swift he discharges on the Sacian's front
A pond'rous blow, which burst the scatter'd brain.
Down his own limbs meantime a torrent flows
Of vital crimson. Smiling, he reflects
On sorrow finish'd, on his Spartan name,
Renew'd in lustre. Sudden to his side
Springs Dithyrambus. Through th' uplifted arm
Of Mindus, pointing a malignant dart
Against the dying Spartan, he impell'd
His spear. The point with violence unspent,
Urg'd by such vigour, reach'd the Persian's throat
Above his corselet. Polydorus stretch'd
His languid hand to Thespia's friendly youth,
Then bow'd his head in everlasting peace.
While Mindus, wasted by his streaming wound,
Beside him faints and dies. In flow'ring prime
He, lord of Colchis, from a bride was torn
His tyrant's hasty mandate to obey.
She tow'rd the Euxien sends her plaintive sighs;
She woos in tender piety the winds:
Vain is their favor; they can never breathe
On his returning sail. At once a croud
Of eager Persians seize the victor's spear.
One of his nervous hands retains it fast
The other bares his falchion. Wounds and death
He scatters round. Sosarmes feels his arm
Lopt from the shoulder. Zatis leaves entwin'd
His fingers round the long disputed lance.
On Mardon's reins descends the pond'rous blade,
Which half divides his body. Pheron strides
Across the pointed ash. His weight o'ercomes
The weary'd Thespian, who resigns his hold;
But cleaves th' elate Barbarian to the brain.
Abrocomes darts forward, shakes his steel,



Whose light'ning threatens death. The wary Greek
Wards with his sword the well-directed stroke,
Then, closing, throws the Persian. Now what aid
Of mortal force, or interposing heav'n
Preserves the eastern hero. Lo! the friend
Of Teribazus. Eager to avenge
That lov'd, that lost companion, and defend
A brother's life, beneath the sinewy arm,
Outstretch'd, the sword of Hyperanthes pass'd
Through Dithyrambus. All the strings of life
At once relax; nor fame, nor Greece demand
More from his valour. Prostrate now he lies
In glories, ripen'd on his blooming head.
Him shall the Thespian maidens in their songs
Record once loveliest of the youthful train,
The gentle, wise, beneficent and brave,
Grace of his lineage, and his country's boast,
Now fall'n. Elysium to his parting soul
Uncloses. So the cedar, which supreme
Among the groves of Libanus hath tow'rd,
Uprooted, low'rs his graceful top, preferr'd
For dignity of growth some royal dome,
Or heav'n devoted fabric to adorn.
Diomedon bursts forward. Round his friend
He heaps destruction. Troops of wailing ghosts
Attend thy shade, fall'n hero! Long prevail'd
His furious arm in vengeance uncontroul'd;
Till four Assyrians on his shelving spear,
Ere from a Cassian's prostrate body freed,
Their pond'rous maces all discharge. It broke.
Still with a shatter'd truncheon he maintains
Unequal fight. Impetuous through his eye
The well aim'd fragment penetrates the brain
Of one bold warrior; there the splinter'd wood,
Infix'd, remains. The hero last unsheaths
His falchion broad. A second sees aghast
His entrails open'd. Sever'd from a third,
The head, steel-cas'd, descends. In blood is roll'd

The grizly beard. That effort breaks the blade
Short from its hilt. The Grecian stands disarm'd.
The fourth, Astaspes, proud Chaldæan lord,
Is nigh. He lifts his iron-plated mace.
This, while a cluster of auxiliar friends
Hang on the Grecian shield, to earth depress'd,
Loads with unerring blows the batter'd helm;
Till on the ground Diomedon extends
His mighty limbs. So, weaken'd by the force
Of some tremendous engine, which the hand
Of Mars impells, a citadel, high-tow'rd,
Whence darts and fire and ruins long have aw'd
Begirding legions, yields at last, and spreads
Its disuniting ramparts on the ground;
Joy fills th' assailants, and the battle's tide
Whelms o'er the widening breach: the Persian thu
O'er the late-fear'd Diomedon advanc'd
Against the Grecian remnant: when behold
Leonidas. At once their ardour froze.
He had awhile behind his friends retir'd,
Oppress'd by labour. Pointless was his spear,
His buckler cleft. As, overworn by storms,
A vessel steers to some protecting bay;
Then, soon as timely gales, inviting, curl
The azure floods, to Neptune shews again
Her masts apparell'd fresh in shrouds and sails,
Which court the vig'rous wind: so Sparta's king,
In strength repair'd, a spear and buckler new
Presents to Asia. From her bleeding ranks
Hydarnes, urg'd by destiny, approach'd.
He, proudly vaunting, left an infant race,
A spouse lamenting on the distant verge
Of Bactrian Ochus. Victory in vain
He, parting, promis'd. Wanton hope will sport
Round his cold heart no longer. Grecian spoils,
Imagin'd triumphs, pictur'd on his mind,
Fate will erase forever. Through the targe,
The thick-mail'd corselet his divided chest
Of bony strength admits the hostile spear.



Leonidas draws back the steely point,
Bent and enfeebled by the forceful blow.
Meantime within his buckler's rim, unseen,
Amphistreus stealing, in th' ungarded flank
His dagger struck. In slow effusion ooz'd
The blood, from Hercules deriv'd; but death
Not yet had reach'd his mark. Th' indignant king
Gripes irresistibly the Persian's throat.
He drags him prostrate. False, corrupt and base,
Fallacious, fell, preeminent was he
Among tyrannic satraps. Phrygia pin'd
Beneath the oppression of his ruthless sway.
Her soil had once been fruitful. Once her towns
Were populous and rich. The direful change
To naked fields and crumbling roofs declar'd,
Th' accurs'd Amphistreus govern'd. As the spear
Of Tyrian Cadmus rivetted to earth
The pois'nous dragon, whose infectious breath
Had blasted all Bœotia; so the king,
On prone Amphistreus trampling, to the rock
Nails down the tyrant, and the fractur'd staff
Leaves in his panting body. But the blood,
Great hero, dropping from the wound, revives
The hopes of Persia. Thy unyielding arm
Upholds the conflict still. Against thy shield
The various weapons shiver, and thy feet
With glitt'ring points surround. The Lydian sword,
The Persian dagger leave their shatter'd hilts;
Bent is the Caspian scymeter; the lance,
The javelin, dart and arrow all combine
Their fruitless efforts. From Alcides sprung,
Thou stand'st unshaken like a Thracian hill,
Like Rhodope, or Hæmus; where in vain
The thund'rer plants his livid bolt; in vain
Keen-pointed lightnings pierce th' encrusted snow;
And winter, beating with eternal war,
Shakes from his dreary wings discordant storms,
Chill sleet, and clatt'ring hail. Advancing bold,
His rapid lance Abrocomes in vain

Aims at the forehead of Laconia's chief.
He, not unguarded, rears his active blade
Athwart the dang'rous blow, whose fury wastes
Above his crest in air. Then, swiftly wheel'd,
The pond'rous weapon cleaves the Persian's knee
Sheer through the parted bone. He sidelong falls.
Crush'd on the ground beneath contending feet,
Great Xerxes' brother yields the last remains
Of tortur'd life. Leonidas persists;
Till Agis calls Dieneces, alarms
Demophilus, Megistias: they o'er piles
Of Allarodian and Sasperian dead
Haste to their leader: they before him raise
The brazen bulwark of their massy shields.
The foremost rank of Asia stands and bleeds;
The rest recoil: but Hyperanthes swift
From band to band his various host prevades,
Their drooping hopes rekindles, in the brave
New fortitude excites: the frigid heart
Of fear he warms. Astaspes first obeys,
Vain of his birth, from ancient Belus drawn,
Proud of his wealthy stores, his stately domes,
More proud in recent victory: his might
Had foil'd Platæa's chief. Before the front
He strides impetuous. His triumphant mace
Against the brave Dieneces he bends.
The weighty blow bears down th' opposing shield,
And breaks the Spartan's shoulder. Idle hangs
The weak defence, and loads th' inactive arm,
Depriv'd of ev'ry function. Agis bares
His ve geful blade. At two well levell'd strokes
Of both his hands, high brandishing the mace,
He mutilates the foe. A Sacian chief
Springs on the victor. Jaxartes' banks
To this brave savage gave his name and birth.
His look erect, his bold deportment spoke
A gallant spirit, but untam'd by laws,
With dreary wilds familiar, and a race
Of rude Barbarians, horrid, as their clime.



From its direction glanc'd the Spartan spear,
Which, upward borne, o'erturn'd his iron cone.
Black o'er his forehead fall the naked locks;
They aggravate his fury: while his foe
Repeats the stroke, and penetrates his chest.
Th' intrepid Sacian through his breast and back
Receives the grinding steel. Along the staff
He writhes his tortur'd body; in his grasp
A barbed arrow from his quiver shakes;
Deep in the streaming throat of Agis hides
The deadly point; then grimly smiles and

From him fate hastens to a nobler prey,
Dieneces. His undefended frame
The shield abandons, sliding from his arm.
His breast is gor'd by javelins. On the foe
He hurls them back, extracted from his wounds.
Life, yielding slow to destiny, at length
Forsakes his riven heart; nor less in death
Thermopylæ he graces, than before
By martial deeds and conduct. What can stem
The barb'rous torrent? Agis bleeds. His spear
Lies useless, irrecoverably plung'd
In Jaxartes' body. Low reclines
Dieneces. Leonidas himself,
Perlabour'd, wounded, with his dinted sword
The rage of war can exercise no more.
One last one glorious effort age performs.
Themophilus, Megistias join their might.
They check the tide of conquest; while the spear
Of slain Dieneces to Sparta's chief
The fainting Agis bears. The pointed ash,
In that dire hand for battle rear'd anew,
Hasts ev'ry Persian's valour. Back in heaps
They roll, confounded, by their gen'ral's voice
In vain exhorted longer to endure
The ceaseless waste of that unconquer'd arm.
Or, when the giants from Olympus chas'd
Th' inferior gods, themselves in terror shun'd

Th' incessant streams of lightning, where the hand
Of heav'n's great father with eternal might
Sustain'd the dreadful conflict. O'er the field
Awhile Bellona gives the battle rest;
When Thespia's leader and Megistias drop
At either side of Lacedæmon's king.
Beneath the weight of years and labour bend
The hoary warriors. Not a groan molests
Their parting spirits; but in death's calm night
All-silent sinks each venerable head;
Like a[illegible]ks, whose deep-descending roots
Had pierc'd resistless through a craggy slope;
There during three long centuries have brav'd
Malignant Eurus, and the boist'rous north;
Till bare and sapless by corroding time
Without a blast their mossy trunks recline
Before their parent hill. Not one remains,
But Agis, near Leonidas, whose hand
The last kind office to his friend performs,
Extracts the Scian's arrow. Life, releas'd
Pours forth in crimson floods; O Agis, pale
Thy placid features, rigid are thy limbs;
They lose their graces. Dim'd, thy eyes reveal
The native goodness of thy heart no more
Yet other graces spring. The noble corse
Leonidas surveys. A pause he finds
To mark, how lovely are the patriot's wounds,
And see those honors on the breast, he lov'd.

But Hyperanthes from the trembling ranks
Of Asia tow'rs, inflexibly resolv'd
The Persian glory to redeem, or fall.
The Spartan, worn by toil, his languid arm
Uplifts once more. He waits the dauntless prince.
The heroes now stand adverse. Each awhile
Restrains his valour. Each, admiring, views
His godlike foe. At length their brandish'd points
Provoke the contest, fated soon to close
The long-continu'd horrors of the day.



l in amaze and fear, the Asian throng,
ıov'd and silent, on their bucklers pause:
ı on the wastes of India, while the earth
ıath him groans, the elephant is seen,
ıuge proboscis writhing, to defy
strong rhinoceros, whose pond'rous horn
ewly whetted on a rock. Anon
ı hideous bulk encounters. Earth her groan
ubles. Trembling, from their covert gaze
savage inmates of surrounding woods
istant terror. By the vary'd art
ther chief the dubious combat long
reat event retarded. Now his lance
through the hostile shield Laconia's king
ell'd. Aside the Persian swung his arm.
eath it pass'd the weapon, which his targe
umber'd. Hopes of conquest and renown
e his courage. Sudden he directs
apid javelin to the Spartan's throat.
he his wary buckler upward rais'd
ch o'er his shoulder turn'd the glancing steel;
one last effort then his scatter'd strength
ecting, levell'd with resistless force
massive orb, and dash'd its brazen verge
on the Persian's forehead. Down he sunk,
hout a groan expiring, as o'erwhelm'd
eath a marble fragment, from its seat
v'd by a whirlwind, sweeping o'er the ridge
ome aspiring mansion. Gen'rous prince!
at could his valour more? His single might
match'd with great Leonidas, and fell
ore his native bands. The Spartan king
stands alone. In heaps his slaughter'd friends,
stretch'd around him, lie. The distant foes
w'r on his head innumerable darts.
m various sluices gush the vital floods;
y stain his fainting limbs. Nor yet with pain
brow is clouded; but those beauteous wounds,
e sacred pledges of his own renown,



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